



ALOPECIA ANGEL'S

SECRETS TO HAIR GROWTH & HEALTH

BY JOHANNA BELSUZARRI
DAHLMAN



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I dedicate this book to all those diagnosed with Alopecia. You are stronger than you think, and you are braver than you know, this is just the first step to ultimate health and wellbeing. My hope and ultimate goal is to help everyone possible, healing from the inside out. I believe there is a way to heal and cure alopecia! If this book helps you in any way, share it with a friend, regardless of alopecia or not, it will lead them to better health. Please stay in touch, subscribe to my blog www.alopeciaangel.com/blog and send me updates anytime at alopeciaangel@gmail.com or visit my website for upcoming events, my 2 Month Signature Program and more www.alopeciaangel.com

A huge Thank You to my loving husband, who's been a supporter and a believer in all things that I do. Life is so much sweeter and better with you.

Preface

I have experienced Alopecia first hand and have results in regaining my hair, understanding my health and achieving results. I am also fortunate to have seen and repeated my successful process in others, others who

have been battling alopecia a lot longer than me, some over decades and in a short time, start to see hair growth. Many clients included are those who experienced alopecia areata, totalis, universalis and others

types of alopecia too including scarring and AGA. It's amazing what our bodies can do to restore health, once you know how to support it. This is my story, my process with instructions, my passion and now, my mission, to help others regain their confidence, hair and health. Together we can achieve the results you want, as I am seeing in my clients. Be disciplined and reap the rewards. If you ever need extra help or guidance I am here

for you. We can set up coaching calls anytime, anywhere around the world! Thank you for trusting me through this process. I know you must be feeling exhausted mentally, emotionally and physically through treatments, medications, and prescriptions that don't seem to help long term and only cover up one hole of hair as another empty one pops up. Myself and my clients have experienced this and much more, as mentioned in a recent blog post, alopecia is more than just hair!

Through my trials and errors, extensive research, reading, and outreach, ***I have learned that curing an auto immune disease is possible.*** I know people who have reversed their Hashimoto's, Multiple Sclerosis and Rheumatoid Arthritis. I know others who have reversed their fibromyalgia and eczema too, all with diet and lifestyle. What's more is that curing my alopecia was accomplished for me by me! No actual doctor helped, except for the holistic and naturopathic ones dedicated to functional medicine that I listened to and read about in which I gained added confidence in myself to treat and heal myself and others, like you.

I devour books, like I devour vegetables, daily and regularly! I am in tune with information about the latest developments and possibilities concerning health, wellness, alopecia, stress management, holistic healing and more. I am a professional wellness expert and speak professionally in front of associations, companies and entrepreneurs globally. I do in fact believe that not all doctors take the time to get to know each of their patients, and not all doctors spend enough time with each patient to fully diagnose them correctly or worse yet, to prescribe accurate treatment. In addition, not all doctors consider the side effects as much as the actual patient would. If only the actual patient would understand that there are a multitude of options. They control their health and destiny. Many times in a position of being diagnosed with an unknown condition like alopecia, we give into fear and give into any treatment and prescription not thinking about long term results or side effects. If only you knew that the efficacy rate of current alopecia treatments is less than 10%, meaning there is no guarantee and the probability of it working is less than 10%. UGH, I would rather spend my time figuring out what led me here and putting the pieces back together in order to do better and be who I was meant to be— someone with big hair!

What am I saying?

I am saying that you need to be proactive in your life and in your health because no one has your best interest in you, then YOU. I believe you are, as you have purchased this book. It is no longer enough to trust the system of doctors or healthcare professionals where you live. Unfortunately the conventional way of medicine prepares doctors for prescription writing and surgeries. They are not taught nutrition, they are not taught what lifestyle is and how that effects our health now, or decades later. Reading, researching and developing yourself is your best asset in order to be capable to make the right decisions for you, and not guided by other people's agenda or lack of knowledge. Know your options and that alone can decrease the stress and anxiety in every situation. If there are "no other options" then keep searching, be relentless and resilient. Challenges not only make you stronger but also allow you to figure out a new path to creative solutions. My mom always taught me to get multiple opinions, before committing on the next step. Working in corporate we also were taught to have multiple bids from vendors that were offering services. This is what brought me here and has allowed me to figure out another way, through combination of functional medicine, ayurveda, TCM (Traditional Chinese Medicine) and more. So let's get started!

Part 1

Getting Started

"Being Challenged In Life Is Inevitable, Being Defeated Is Optional" - *Roger Crawford*

In looking for answers and remedies for my alopecia, I was told by various doctors that it was all stress induced, although looking back, I can see where I went wrong, from birth till adulthood and how everything compounds: the diet, the lifestyle and especially the toxins. I will get into that much more later on... but know that alopecia doesn't come from just one thing or another... it comes from multiple factors, multiple things brought you here and a multi faceted approach is what's needed to overcome alopecia once and for all. At the time, I was being guided by doctors in Europe, California and Colorado. None were much help, but when one said it was all stress, I could see that at the time it was very true. If you've been to my website, I have my full story there:

www alopeciaangel.com/about In summary: emotional, physical and relationship stressors that are apart of life, created instability while anxiety crept in along with additional stress that inundated my body, which in reality, I wasn't prepared for. I wasn't prepared for everything all at once, and found myself doing things all by myself, feeling unsupported, unloved and struggling to make ends meet. I am an action oriented person. I get things done. A task master who dreams up to-do lists in order to get things going, accomplished and fully executed. Yes, a true type A and in this 2 year period I did a lot in a short amount of time all by myself. No family or friends to lean on. (They were there, but I didn't want to impose on my friends as they had their own challenges and transitions. Family? ... well, tensions rose and strife prevailed, so those doors weren't an option. It was a struggle and per usual, I just pressed on, being positive and looking for solutions. I was accustomed to work stress, but as always, there are different kinds of stress and amounts, that can effect you differently. For me, this stress had reached a new level for me. I found myself moving twice out of state within 12 months, had multiple transitions with work, life stress and personal and family issues, all which came over me like a huge tsunami.

Alopecia erupted and unlike anything else I had encountered, it took time to realize that what was needed most was to step back, analyze and breathe. I had to re-evaluate every aspect of my life and how I was doing things.

Healing your body, mind and spirit is a **long term game** , **there are no quick fixes**. Most things within this guide, you will be able to implement immediately and feel better immediately. Soon enough, if you embrace all the challenges within this guidebook and homework for you to do and improve upon, you will be on the path to recovery and optimal health. Other things, are like a muscle which you will need to work at, whether daily or weekly, but lasting change, does involve effort, action and proactiveness. Even when you don't feel like it.

My hope is that you heal quicker than I did. Truly, all in all, I saw results real quick, probably after my last trials of over a year and a half, I saw huge growth in 4 months and then coming close to the 2 year mark, I had complete coverage over my patches which keep growing. Now after more than 4 years, my full thick hair is back... its a process but I and many others have obtained it! How much did I lose? I lost immense amounts of hair all

over, telogen effluvium, alopecia areata and frontal fibrosing alopecia hit me all at once. Not to mention thinning eyebrows and eyelashes, thinning all over was the norm, which now more than 4 years later, I have my thick curls once again. All in all it took me 2+ years and then some for complete coverage but one thing is coverage and another is thickness and full growth. Hair has a cycle and as much as we can encourage it, its like the seasons, it too has its season for growth, rest and shed. However we can support our bodies and immune systems and make this happen faster!

The shedding was scary and traumatizing. However, now, my lashes are longer, my eyebrow hair needs regular trims . Today, I am not only enjoying my hair, but also peace of mind, in addition to extreme health which allows me to not get sick even from colds and flu's and ultimately with this knowledge, you can keep alopecia at bay, never to return again! I arm you with tools and techniques to better serve your hair and health goals. It's amazing how resilient our bodies can be once we feed it what it needs to thrive, spiritually, emotionally, physically and lovingly.

I am excited to help you, so let's begin!

Warning: If you're pregnant, breastfeeding or have any ongoing health concerns, make sure to speak with your doctor, or grab a coaching call with me, before using any conventional or natural hair loss remedies. You should also make sure that your treatment option does not interact with any current medications or supplements. In addition, combining natural and conventional treatments (like minoxidil with essential oils) may cause unwanted side effects. I would highly suggest you get off your medications with the help of your doctor, before starting a natural way to healing. Sometimes getting off meds cold turkey does more harm than good, other times it's ok. I cannot say what's best for you and your personal condition as I am unaware of it- however, I am fond of natural and holistic modalities and am available to coach you personally should you want the book + guidance for your individual circumstance. I am not a doctor, only a profound devoted human to health who reads, researches and makes this book available to others. In part, you will see and learn from my experience, and in other areas you will get research backed information on what is harmful and what is great for your health and hair. I saw results, my clients see results, most in less than 2 months, others in less than 4 weeks (with coaching or with the

Signature 2 Month Program- see Success Stories on website for more info)
.... and now its up to you to implement and see results! Let's GO!

“Take care of your body. It's the only place you have to live.” ~Jim Rohn

Your body is a harmonized engine, and when out of balance, it signals things to us just like a “check engine light” on your car dashboard. This is why perhaps we get watery eyes, throw up, have upset stomachs, headaches, or rashes, because this is how our body communicates to us. There is evidence of something wrong. Do not ignore the slightest signs as perhaps certain foods don't sit well with your organism. Be aware and know the consequences of constantly indulging in foods that do you harm.

“The best and most efficient pharmacy is within your own system.” ~Robert C. Peale

“Autoimmune disease is an epidemic in our society, affecting an estimated 50 million Americans. But it doesn't have to be. Although genetic predisposition accounts for approximately one-third of your risk of developing an autoimmune disease, the other two-thirds comes from your environment, your diet, and your lifestyle. In fact, experts are increasingly recognizing that certain dietary factors are key contributors to autoimmune disease, placing these autoimmune conditions in the same class of diet- and lifestyle-related diseases as type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and obesity. This means that autoimmune disease is directly linked to our food choices and how we decide to live your life. It also means that we can manage and reverse autoimmune disease simply by changing how you eat and making more informed choices about sleep, activity, and stress... and that's some pretty darned good news!”

Hair Loss

Hairloss - Why is this happening? There are multiple factors as to why you have hairloss and multiple factors that will get you the healing you need. It's not one thing or another, it's a full list of ingredients. Same with alopecia; however, more than likely your autoimmune response, was triggered *lastly* by leaky gut. Leaky gut can be healed and that's what's causing your alopecia and autoimmune response. Leaky gut is where the lining of your

intestinal wall becomes perforated and food particles get into your bloodstream resulting in an autoimmune response. So why does this happen? Diet & lifestyle. My books gives you all the steps and info you need to heal, just like I have and my clients have.

I go into detail about why this happens to children at the end of the book, although the same can hold true now for adults and young adults alike. Both groups of people are exposed to toxins, changes in our food, water and air supply, more pollution and more chemicals than ever before. Our agricultural practices have changed, and for the worse. From here, lets add on years of the SAD or Standard American Diet (Western Diet) and perhaps you can also throw in the amount of vaccines, less activity and more EMF's which all contribute to our less than healthy population which per statistics are very high risk for pre diabetes, heart disease, obesity and so many more ailments. We've seen a surge in autoimmune diseases, even in children and we've also seen a surge in autism and other diseases. We need to go back to basics, which is the best thing you can do for your health and your families health, because no one is teaching us true nutrition, no is teaching us stress management, no is teaching us pillars of great health, on the contrary we are bombarded with promotions for new pills, new medicines and antibiotics for everything from a headache to earache since birth. Many are bandaids for things that can be easily fixed with diet and lifestyle. Let's start changing our beliefs and habits and that alone can take us further in our quest for true health, brilliant hair and healthy families.

"I know it can be frustrating to lose your hair, but don't lose hope. With a healthy diet and lifestyle along with consistent use of natural hair loss remedies and a dose of patience, it's truly possible for your hair to grow faster and thicker in the near future. " Dr. Axe

Part 2 Inside the Body + Kitchen

Diet

Taking an in-depth look at diet is necessary as there are foods that trigger inflammation and others that help hair grow, and decrease overall inflammation too. "Inflammation is a factor in all chronic illnesses, and this

is one area where the foods we eat can make a huge difference. In some cases, an immune system that isn't regulating itself properly, directly causes the illness; in others, inflammation is merely an element of the illness or a contributor to how the illness came about—but it is always a player and a problem. What this means is that reducing inflammation and giving the immune system the resources it needs, as well as the opportunity to regulate itself, can help in every single chronic illness. This is important because inflammation is strongly influenced by what we eat, how well we sleep, how stressed we are, and how active we are. And this is why chronic illness can respond so positively to changes in diet and lifestyle.” (thepaleomom.com)

What are you eating and what are you not eating?

The best way to not be tempted is to clean out your fridge and pantry. Let's do that now.

“True healthcare reform starts in your kitchen, not in Washington” ~Anonymous

Challenge:

Give away or donate the following: anything that comes in a bag or wrapper. All processed foods, snack foods, crackers, cookies, chips, cereals, anything that doesn't come from the ground or mother nature. Stay away from sodas, energy drinks, gatorades and all caffeine, alcohol and sugar. Even popcorn that comes from the store is normally made with canola oil, stop eating this and anything made with vegetable oils, shortening or baked items. All grains, pastas, legumes, breads, dairy and gluten need to be cut out of your diet and these food products need to be given away- even if it says gluten free- if its in a wrapper- give it away. We are cleaning house - internally and externally for you to heal. This is the first step. Clean out your pantry, and full kitchen now.

Cooking has become a defense mechanism to enhance my health and that of my family, loved ones and clients. You have control to add in the best ingredients when you cook. Outside at restaurants, they are looking for margins, so the cheapest ingredients are used to make higher profit. Please get rid of these foods, and let's start from ground zero, to the foods, utensils and everything in between.

I recommend staying away from anything fried, take out, fast food, sugar, soda, high sodium, and packaged foods. “Globally, poor diets pose a greater risk to our health than alcohol, tobacco, drugs and unsafe sex combined, according to the report by the Global Panel on Agriculture and Food Systems for Nutrition (Glopan).” Although the connection between eating fried foods and obesity and heart disease is well known, a study published earlier this month is the first to link eating fried potatoes to death risk. The study found people who ate fried potatoes (including french fries, fried potatoes, and hash browns) more than twice a week were more likely to die early than those who ate fried potatoes less often.” Food is just one aspect of your whole health. Eating a bad diet adds to the inflammation in the body. Our goal is to decrease all inflammation in the body, and give attention to the root cause of the issue causing Alopecia. Do yourself a favor and be mindful and cognizant of what you are eating, organic as much as possible. Every bit counts.

Top Hair Loss Remedies: Foods to Avoid

There are also foods that I recommend eliminating or avoiding as much as possible like:

- Trans fatty acids — Unhealthy fats like trans fatty acids have been shown to increase inflammation and production of DHT, which can cause hair loss. Stay away from hydrogenated oils like corn oil and soybean oil, which are loaded with trans fats. Really, you should only use coconut oil, olive oil, ghee and grass-fed butter to cook with- nothing else!
- Sugar — Sugar plays a role in hormones imbalances, contributes to insulin resistance, increases DHT and causes inflammation, all of which can lead to hair loss. Sugar is everywhere and this is why cooking at home you have more control of what ingredients you use and what’s going into your food. Sugar has over 50 different names and even pseudo healthy items like “agave nectar” are sugars that are just as bad as high fructose corn syrup.
- Processed foods — Foods that are highly processed are often loaded with unhealthy fats, sugar and sodium so they’re very counterproductive to healthy hair growth. Even if its packaged and gluten free or dairy free or whatever — it usually has other ingredients that are harmful to your progress and health. Stay away... I would also eliminate SOY- all SOY and OAT Products (oat milk, soy milk, soy yogurt, tofu, tempeh, soybeans etc)
- Alcohol — Alcohol can increase inflammation and cause liver toxicity,

leading to hair loss. Heavy drinking as well as smoking have both been linked to increased risk of hair loss. (4b) This includes vaping- if you vape, know that there are studies with a direct correlation to hairloss. Stop the smoking, alcohol and vaping immediately.

- Caffeine — Yes, in small amounts, organic coffee and tea can be beneficial to hair health, but you don't want to overdo it because too much caffeine can cause dehydration, hormone imbalances and even production of DHT. (dr.axe.com) for this reason and in my program- I am telling you to stop all coffee, black teas and alcohol for the next 6-9 months. Min. 6 months.

Personally I stay away from all grains, GMO's, corn, packaged foods, baked goods, soy, flours, breads, cereals, anything with added sugar, fried, or dairy. There are exceptions in general, but 90% of the time, I eat clean and with a mission to do what's best for my body and health. I follow a ketogenic and paleo diet and also do intermittent fasting. I think both go hand in hand. I see results and am able to have energy, not feel sluggish and continue to lose weight and stay trim. As I approach 40 my efforts, however little or big with exercise are immediately recognized. This is great, as you age, your metabolism and body fluctuate making it more challenging to stay fit, but staying Keto/Paleo and doing a bit of intermittent fasting has been very helpful if you can have the discipline, you will see results, quickly! Not just in weight loss but also in hair growth. Even after my time with alopecia, I still remain paleo and have created a cookbook for you= which comes into the next phase of your healing. I don't want you to feel deprived, so you can have your deserts, salty cravings and breads, just made with other ingredients that fortify and support your body and hair without going astray with things that will eventually decline your health. You can find over 100+ recipes in my cookbook which will help you get better hair health and health all around)

I have a client, she's had alopecia for over 10 years. It all started when she was 9 years old. At 25 we met and I saw she had over 10 bald spots that were growing massively all around- like most bald spots- they like to connect. I told her about my program and guess what? She followed everything I said and in 9 months she saw total full hair growth. Thick and luscious. Never before had she had this improvement or progress. She had tried everything from Xeljanz to cortisone shots to pills and creams. Nothing worked. At 25 though, I was concerned that she didn't have kids yet and of

course as females, we all want that choice and option. Don't ruin your health over prescriptions and low efficacy meds that don't give results for short term gain.

What should you eat? I highly recommend a diet full of vegetables. Lots of veggies in as many colors as possible from rainbow chard to cauliflower and all the greens you can grab your hands on. Avoid the obvious culprits of junk food, packaged foods, chips, dips, frozen dinners, also take out all pasta, grains, breads, rice and anything dairy or wheat and stick to vegetables, with grass fed meats, pasture raised eggs and wild caught fish if you eat animal products. I would also recommend lots of healthy fats such as avocados, coconut oil, grass fed butter and olive oil because fats are not only good for brain health, but also contain omega 3's and keep you feeling satiated. I eat 2-3 avocados a day, cook with coconut oil and eat olive oil. Other Omega 3's include walnuts, avocados, sardines, mackerel, wild caught salmon and pasture raised eggs. All wonderful options. Tip: I see best results when you add liver, and grass-fed beef and lamb to the diet. Why? Because they are loaded, especially liver, with high nutrient dense vitamins.

Why does it need to be wild caught and pasture raised ? Because the alternative is farmed fish and corn fed chickens. That corn is likely a GMO (genetically modified) which is bad for your organism and also those eggs which come from non-pasture raised chickens which are likely cooped up eating each other's feces and spreading disease as well. Don't you ever scratch your head about the amount of listeria and salmonella cases and outbreaks that the USA has had? It's because of their farming practices and how they have skipped over the wellbeing and health of animals for quick profit and high demand pressures. Wild caught fish is best, as its from the wild, and not farmed. Farmed fish are all crammed, eating each others feces and *that* "nutrition" goes back to you once you eat it, causing over time, more disease and havoc. Farmed fish and chicken are normally injected with added hormones + antibiotics to speed growth and weight. This is how more diseases are transferred to humans. Stick to a clean diet and watch how you feel, see the results, as you incorporate healthy food, and leave out the junk. In an article in Shape Magazine, the top 8 benefits of clean eating include weight loss, increased energy, better gums and teeth, stronger hair and nails, feeling fuller longer, increased focus and mental health and better sleep.

Growing up, I tended to be full, well rounded and considered over weight to some. My mother would deny this, but I was definitely more “big boned” than the rest of my classmates. As I grew older in my teens and twenties, I continued to be curvy weighing around 160/165 lbs for 5’9 which was normal for me. Size 8 or 10 was pretty normal too. In my early twenties I was curious about pilates and fell in love. Became a devoted pilates devotee, 3, 4 and 5 times a week. With weekly pilates, came more thirst for knowledge in terms of diet and nutrition. After my masters degree I was hired by Apple and moved to Texas. Since I was working long hours, anywhere from 12-16 hours a day, I ate breakfast, lunch and dinner at the cafeteria. Thankfully, “Café Macs” as we called it, served up amazing food, discounted with healthy options. During my year in Texas, I had become a vegan and was repulsed with the meat production, Monsanto and “Big Food” practices of the USA. I leaned out pretty quickly by eating 3 meals a day, and saw myself shrink down to 130 pounds from 145 which is where I was at back in California before leaving. I had lost all anatomy that allowed me to be perceived as a woman. My health was fine, but energy was low. My skin color was dull and hair lack luster. Vegans need extra vitamins since they aren’t eating meat, fish or eggs. Supplementation is crucial for any diet, but most importantly for vegans and vegetarians. There is research that shows mothers who were vegan when pregnant later have deficiencies with their babies teeth and development. We were made to eat meat. Some clients of mine are strict vegetarians and vegans, but I work with them in coaching sessions to best help them tackle alopecia within their constraints.

Apple later transferred me to their Miami office and that’s where the uptick of fish, oysters, crab, and a plethora of seafood kicked in. I gained weight in a healthy manner, and maintained my 140 lbs. Which looks extremely healthy and fit on me, plus my hair, skin and persona just radiated and glowed with so much vitamin D, sunshine, outdoor sports, and great healthy food.

From vegan to pescatarian to Paleo. Having an autoimmune disease, you need to know that certain “healthy” foods are not healthy for you because you are special. You are in a category of your own. The way your body reacts to oats for example is quite the opposite of how a normal person with no autoimmune disease can eat these “health foods” and not have any issues or reactions. Because you are now labeled with an autoimmune disease, your

diet HAS TO SHIFT FOR RESULTS. You cannot look at your friends or families' diet and follow them, they are not YOU. Many times when I get a client who is a child, the whole family pitches in and adapts their diet to the one child with alopecia. This is a fabulous support strategy so they don't feel left out, rather included and part of the process. Many times the parents have health issues like eczema or psoriasis and while we are fixing and healing their child, their own symptoms also go away with my plan.

Another shift is how we look at medicine. I believe in medicine and believe it has a role in our health and also it has a time and place for certain ailments. Don't misunderstand me, I do think doctors are needed and believe in surgeries and certain procedures when needed, but at the same time, we are also not addressing the harm many things we now think are harmless. For example over the counter meds; I am guilty of using Advil for headaches and monthly cramps on a regular basis. This monthly use adds up and also affects our health. Tylenol usage over the long term has been shown to cause liver damage. If we grow accustomed and hence teach our kids to model us, then we are repeating the same lifestyle choices. Popping pills is not the answer as this can cause leaky gut. Many things can cause leaky gut, but as mentioned before, it's a whole host of things, not just one thing or another.

NSAIDS use attributes to the cause of leaky gut.

Environment plays a huge role in your health as much as the food you eat!

After about 5 years in Miami, I moved to Denver and then a short year after to the Netherlands. Even my time in my native California wasn't as great as my time in Miami. Environment means more than just the weather pattern. It's about who you surround yourself with, coworkers, friends, family. I'll talk more about this in another chapter.

As for diet, I am happy with Paleo and Keto diets and have remained Keto and Paleo for the last almost 9 years. I feel the best, look and feel healthy and maintain energy, weight and my clothes- a size 4. I actually have clothes from 9-10 years ago that still fit me. Not sure too many people can say that anymore. In my teens and twenties, I kept buying clothes, because they would stop fitting or would be stretched, or my frame would fluctuate. In the long term you save money if you keep your size, keep your health and weight at consistent levels.

What is Keto?

The Ketogenic diet was introduced in the 1920s as a treatment for epilepsy. But the benefits of this low-carb diet go beyond treating seizures. It promotes weight loss, improves cardiovascular health and helps with anxiety and depression.

"The biggest benefit of a Keto diet is metabolic flexibility. When you're able to pull energy from both glucose and Ketones that the body produces, you are metabolically flexible, which has benefits that extend throughout your entire body. Think mind, body and soul."

Also, when you eliminate sugar and high-carb foods from your daily diet, **"your body is able to heal itself and detox from the accumulated inflammation that it is constantly fighting,"** That means less brain fog, improved cognition and brain health. Consequently, the improved mental clarity makes it easier for you to make smart food choices. Moreover, following a Keto diet also reduces inflammation. "Reduced inflammation can have myriad benefits, from improving your skin to healing your gut and treating the symptoms of ailments like acid reflux disease. (forbes.com)

AIP = Autoimmune Protocol

Have you heard of this diet? It's Paleo but more strict. **This is actually where we start in my program.** This is needed for at least 30-45 day. It's technically considered an elimination diet, as you are supposed to only eat certain foods and then reintroduce foods slowly and gradually. "Some foods are obvious wins for a health-promoting diet because they have tons of beneficial constituents and very few or no constituents that undermine health—good examples of these superfoods are organ meats, seafood, and most vegetables. Other foods are obvious fails because they have a relative lack of health-promoting constituents and are rife with problematic compounds—good examples are gluten-containing grains, peanuts, and soy products. But many foods fall into the amorphous world of gray in between these two extremes. Tomatoes, for example, have some exciting nutrients, but they also contain several compounds that are so effective at stimulating the immune system that they have been investigated for use in vaccines as adjuvants (the chemicals in vaccines that enhance your immune response to whatever

you're getting immunized against). The biggest difference between a standard Paleo diet and the Autoimmune Protocol is where we draw the line between "yes" foods and "no" foods in order to get more healthpromoting compounds and fewer detrimental compounds in our diet. Those who are typically quite healthy can tolerate less-optimal foods than those who aren't. You can think of the Autoimmune Protocol as a pickier version of the Paleo diet; it accepts only those foods that are clear winners." (thepaleomom.com)

"Following the AIP diet involves increasing your intake of nutrient-dense, health-promoting foods while avoiding foods that may be triggers for your disease.

In summary, the rules of what to eat are:

- organ meat and offal (aim for 5 times per week)
- fish (sardines especially) and shellfish (aim for at least 3 times per week)
- vegetables of all kinds, as much variety as possible and the whole rainbow, aim for 8-14 cups per day
- Green vegetables
- Colorful vegetables and fruit (red, purple, blue, yellow, orange, white)
- Cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cabbage, kale, turnips, arugula, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, watercress, mustard greens, etc.)
- Sea vegetables (excluding algae like chlorella and spirulina which are immune stimulators)
- Edible Fungi, like mushrooms
- herbs and spices
- quality meats (grass-fed, pasture-raised, wild as much as possible) (poultry - this is a low tier food item, I would try to keep it out of your diet for now completely due to high omega-6 content. Chicken and turkey are low grade options for health and healing.
- healthy fats (pasture-raised/grass-fed animal fats [rendered or as part of your meat], fatty fish, olive oil, avocado oil, coconut oil, ghee and grass-fed butter
- fruit (keeping fructose intake between 10g and 40g daily-note that 20g is probably optimal, best to stick with berries and forgo the tropical fruits which have high sugar content same with dried fruit)
- probiotic/fermented foods (fermented vegetables or fruit, kombucha, water

kefir, coconut milk kefir, coconut milk yogurt (nothing with real dairy. Other fermented options include sauerkraut and kimchi!)

- glycine-rich foods (anything with connective tissue, joints or skin, organ meat, and bone broth, collagen)
- Source the best-quality ingredients you can
- Eat as much variety as possible.

In addition, remove the following from your diet:

- Grains
- Legumes
- Dairy
- Refined and processed sugars and oils
- Eggs (especially the whites)
- Nuts (including nut butters, flours and oils)
- Seeds (including seed oil, cocoa, coffee and seed-based spices)



FOOD

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ITEMS TO A OI D
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- Nightshades (potatoes [sweet potatoes are fine], tomatoes, eggplants, sweet and hot peppers, cayenne, red pepper, tomatillos, goji berries etc. and spices

derived from peppers, including paprika)

- Potential Gluten Cross-Reactive Foods
- Alcohol
- NSAIDS (like aspirin or ibuprofen)
- Non-nutritive sweeteners (yes, all of them, even stevia)
- Emulsifiers, thickeners, and other food additives

Moderate your intake of the following:

- Fructose (from fruits and starchy vegetables, aiming for between 10 and 25 grams per day)
- Salt (using only unrefined salt such as Himalayan pink salt or Celtic gray salt)
- Moderate- and high-glycemic-load fruits and vegetables (such as dried fruit, plantain, and taro root)
- Omega-6 polyunsaturated fatty acid–rich foods (such as poultry and fatty cuts of industrially produced meat)
- Black and green tea
- Coconut
- Natural sugars like blackstrap molasses, maple syrup and honey

This diet is appropriate for everyone with diagnosed autoimmune disorders or with suspected autoimmune diseases. It is very simply an extremely nutrient-dense diet that is devoid of foods that irritate the gut, cause gut dysbiosis and activate the immune system. You will not be missing out on any nutrients and this diet is absolutely appropriate to follow for the rest of your life. If you have a specific autoimmune disease that causes extra food sensitivities, those should be taken into account with your food choices.”
(thepaleomom.com)

The Autoimmune Protocol is an elimination diet at its core, rather than a long-term therapeutic diets. It’s designed to cut out the most likely food culprits while flooding the body with nutrients, but reintroductions are an important part of optimizing for lifelong health. So yes, eventually, you get to reintroduce foods that you’ve been avoiding. But beware that many yummy foods, like your pastas, breads and grains and dairy will still need to be taken our long term and thus, in my cook book I have over 100 recipes

for things that give you options when you do want pizza, pasta and breads. There is a way to have your cake and eat it too... its all in the ingredients!

How long is eventually? Ideally, you'd wait to reintroduce foods until you're feeling amazing, but in general its at the 30-45 day mark. As long as you're seeing improvements thanks to your diet and lifestyle changes, you can try some reintroductions after four weeks. In general, reintroduce only one food every five to seven days and spend that time monitoring yourself for symptoms. Symptoms of a reaction aren't always obvious, so keep an eye out for the following:

- Symptoms of your disease returning or worsening
- Gastrointestinal symptoms: tummy ache, heartburn, nausea, constipation, diarrhea, change in frequency of bowel movements, gas, bloating, undigested or partly digested food particles in stool
- Reduced energy, fatigue, or energy dips in the afternoon, or a second wind in the late evening that makes it hard to go to bed at a good time
- Cravings for sugar, fat, or caffeine
- Pica (craving minerals from nonfood items like clay, chalk, dirt, or sand)
- Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, or just not feeling well rested in the morning
- Headaches (mild to migraine)
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Increased mucus production: phlegm, runny nose, or postnasal drip
- Coughing or increased need to clear your throat
- Itchy eyes or mouth
- Sneezing
- Aches and pains: muscle, joint, tendon, or ligament
- Changes in skin: rashes, acne, dry skin, little pink bumps or spots, dry hair or nails
- Mood issues: mood swings, feeling low or depressed
- Brain fog
- Feeling anxious, less able to handle stress

The procedure for reintroductions, taken from the procedure used to challenge food allergies and sensitivities, is as follows:

1. Select a food to challenge. Be prepared to eat it two or three times in one day, then avoid it completely again for a few days.
2. The first time you eat the food, eat half a teaspoon or even less (one teensy little nibble). Wait fifteen minutes.
3. If you have any symptoms, don't eat any more. If you don't, eat one teaspoon of the food (a small bite). Wait fifteen minutes.
4. If you have any symptoms, don't eat any more. If you don't, eat one and a half teaspoons of the food (a slightly bigger bite).
5. That's it for now. Wait two to three hours after eating those small amounts and monitor yourself for symptoms.
6. Now eat a normal-sized portion of the food—either by itself or as part of a meal.
7. Do not eat that food again for five to seven days and don't reintroduce any other foods during that time. Monitor yourself for symptoms.
8. If you have no symptoms during the challenge day or at any time in the next five to seven days, you may reincorporate this food into your diet.

It's best not to be in a hurry to reintroduce foods. Generally, the longer you wait, the more likely you are to be successful. But when you introduce particular foods is ultimately your choice. How you feel is the best gauge, and only you will know if you are ready. A word of caution, though: don't let cravings influence you. Your decision should be based on how good you feel and how much improvement you're seeing in your disease.

With changes in diet, it's important to shed light on food industry, where your food comes from, current practices for high demand and much more concerning your food supply for you and your family. Some Food Documentaries that I highly suggest you watch:

- **What the Health**
- **Food Matters**
- **Fed Up**
- **Food Inc,**
- **King Corn,**
- **Cowspiracy**
- **Vaxxed**
- **Over Fed and Under Nourished**
- **Dirty Money (Series),**

- **Root Cause,**
- **Heal,**
- **Rotten (series)**
- **The Bleeding Edge**

The above documentaries not only detail what's new with our various systems of food, but also include insights in the politics surrounding foods sources and how weary consumers get the short end of the stick. Be a knowledgeable consumer and know where your food comes from.

For me personally, reintroductions left me in denial. I always grew up eating oatmeal and cereal (standard American diet - SAD for short) I also indulged here and there in some form of bread. While I was trying to heal my alopecia I noticed things getting worse when I ate muesli or granola or even a croissant. I live in Europe now, so croissants are amazing here.... and its not like I had them all the time, but once every couple weeks was OK, or so I thought. It took me a couple times to realize how my body was reacting. Sometimes it can be subtle, and sometimes it can be more obvious. For me, when I eat pasta, or bread, it takes about 4-6 hours later and I start to itch all over my back and stomach. I itch as if mosquitos have bitten me, although nothing is there. I itch all night, wondering what is going on. I itch so much, it wakes me up. It took me awhile to figure this out and make the connection, partly because I was in denial, partly because I couldn't really believe that something "healthy" that I've had for all my life now creates a different reaction. This is what happens with an autoimmune disease, keep a journal and start putting down, how you feel, what you are eating and even if the slightest thing is off like a random earache or headache or constipation or tummy troubles, than look back and see what you ate that day... it could be just that.

Also, in terms of "cheating" you need to know that AIP is not what I recommend you do forever. It's a detox of sorts. Don't cheat, once you do, you have to start over. That's the reality of it; make the effort to do it 100% for 30 -45 days. In addition, let's say you decide to go back to your normal ways after healing alopecia. ... don't do it. I have had clients who heal quickly and then after 9 months they slip into their old habits and guess what? They are signing up for more coaching and guidance because their alopecia has returned. We don't want that to happen. Cheating occasionally

is ok, **after you have completely healed ...** but it needs to be less than *10% of the time*. Have your favorite cake on your

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** Non starch : not proteins, legumes, or roots There is no target quantit of calories b design; as long as a diet is made of health foods, the bod ill match calories in and energ

consumed until optimal eight is achie ed.

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birthday but don't use holidays as times to indulge... your hair and health depend on you!

Hence, this is why I made my cookbook, to give you recipes and treats that are all paleo and customizable to your preferences and allergens. You can have your bread, cake and much more, it just has a different look, feel, and perhaps even taste as the ingredients will be healthier and less junk added into it.

The tools you use to cook with are also critical as they are used daily. If you haven't already, stop using the microwave oven. This quick fix of heating things up is slowly killing you. "People may experience any or all of the following after being exposed to high levels of microwave radiation.

- Impaired cognition
- Nausea
- Vision problems
- Depression and irritability
- **Weakened immune system**
- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Insomnia and/or sleep disturbances
- Frequent urination and extreme thirst" (naturalsociety.com)

Pots, pans, and cooking containers should be cast iron, ceramic, stoneware, glass or stainless steel. Anything outside of that should be changed and tossed. Your health is cumulative, that's why each area counts to give you the best overall optimal health. Food storage should be in glass or ceramic, not in plastic- ever- even if it says BPA free. still don't use it. They tend to incorporate other carcinogenic plastics into the mix while taking BPA out..

its a lose lose game. Avoid plastics at all cost. Toss out all tupper ware and food storage that's plastic. Use only glass and ceramic, your food will keep their taste and quality as plastic containers leach into food, cause cancer and illness.

“Here are the top 5 materials I recommend for a healthy kitchen, and why:

- Cast Iron
- Stainless Steel
- Glass
- Bamboo
- Ceramic

Cast iron

Pots and pans made of cast iron are heirloom-worthy kitchenware workhorses that can be used on the cooktop and, if necessary, transferred into the oven for continued cooking or braising. Uncoated cast iron cookware requires careful “seasoning” with oil to ensure that food doesn’t stick to the surface.

Fortunately popular cast iron cookware manufacturers like Lodge are now selling cast iron cookware with a “pre-seasoned” finish.

Their enameled cast iron cookware comes in gorgeous colors and the finish is even easier to maintain. Enameled cast iron dutch ovens and casseroles are best for cooking “slow food” like soups, stews, roasts and chili. If you have invested in a piece of enameled cast iron cookware, you can also marinate meat or store leftovers—even tomato-based foods like chili—in the refrigerator, as the ceramic finish is impervious to acid. Unlike pans that are coated with a layer of chemicals to prevent sticking, cast iron cookware does not release gases or chemical particles into the air or your food when it is heated—so you can get your sear on without worrying about what you’re inhaling.

To preserve the naturally non-stick properties of your cast iron cookware, it’s best to rinse well with warm water using a stiff brush. Then reheat on the stove top until dry. Cookware reaches 400F in 4 minutes on medium heat

and is considered sterile once it reaches 212F, so no soap is necessary. Rub with a light coat of coconut oil after every wash.

Stainless Steel

Stainless steel is everywhere in kitchens, from decorative finishes to cookware and utensils. It's a time-tested, durable, and non-toxic material that can withstand use (and even abuse) on the cooktop, in the oven, on the table, or for storage in the fridge or pantry. Many stainless steel products are also comprised of recycled material, making this a great green option for your kitchen and family.

The numbers (18/8, 18/10, 304 etc) you see associated with stainless steel can be confusing but they're quite simple.

In 18/10 Stainless Steel, the first number refers to the percentage of chromium present and the second represents the amount of nickel. Chromium helps bind oxygen to the surface which protects the iron in stainless steel from rusting. Nickel enhances the corrosion resistance. 18/8 and 18/10 are also known as 304 Grade, and are the two most common grades of stainless steel for food prep and dining.

High quality stainless steel won't rust or become pitted from contact with acidic foods like orange juice or tomato sauce, as it is a non-reactive material. That also means it won't absorb food odors and flavors from one use to the next. It's also extremely durable and easy to clean. So stainless steel is a favorite material for reusable water bottles and lunch gear, too.

Glass

Baking, serving, and storing your food in glass is the perfect way to add safe sparkle to your kitchen. Glass kitchenware is free of lead and chemicals like BPA that are commonly found in plastics, which makes it the perfect material for your kitchen creations and ingredients. Fortunately for the klutzy cook, glass is not as fragile as it appears— especially Duralux and Anchor Hocking tempered glass, which can withstand temperature changes or even being dropped without breaking. If tempered glass does happen to break, which actually takes a fair amount of effort, it shatters into chunks

rather than shards, making for an easier and safer cleanup. Some glass, like Simax borosilicate (think lab beakers!) can even be used safely on the stovetop.

Using glass bakeware takes the guesswork out of testing for doneness; a quick peek at your pie crust is enough to tell whether you've gone from browned to burnt. Unlike metal pans, glass bakeware heats very evenly, with few hot spots. Glass also retains heat for longer than metal, which means that your lasagna will stay warm long enough for you to get it to the table. Because of glass' excellent heat retention properties, you may want to adjust your oven temperature down by 25 degrees to prevent over-browning. This precaution is especially important if you are adapting a recipe that was written for a metal pan, or if you are baking a treat that contains a fair amount of sugar.

When you store food in glass, you can have confidence that it'll taste the same when you crack open the fridge again: glass is non-porous, which means that odors and flavors can't be absorbed. And, for storage of dry goods, airtight glass jars are a beautiful way to not only see what you have on hand, but also to prevent bugs and pests from nesting in your ingredients. Best of all, glass is easy to clean and is dishwasher-safe.

Tip: I save jelly/jam and pasta sauce jars, peel off labels and use the jars for store food, liquid storage, spices and other things without having to buy extra jars or anything fancy. I like to re-use them along with my glass storage food containers that you can buy anywhere, even at Ikea for cheap.

Bamboo

Bamboo is a renewable resource that is harvested in a sustainable way, but it's a kitchen favorite for more reasons than its eco-friendliness. Bamboo is less porous than other woods, which means it is less likely to take on or transfer odors (if you've ever sliced an apple on a cutting board that was previously used for onions, you'll appreciate this benefit.) Bamboo absorbs very little moisture compared to other woods, and for this reason it also resists swelling, which can lead to cracking and warping.

Cutting boards made from bamboo won't dull your knives, and they are also less likely to result in cross-contamination than plastic boards thanks to the naturally-occurring anti-microbial compounds in bamboo. Plus, getting the cutting board down from the cabinet is easier with bamboo than with other materials, as it is lighter in weight. Bamboo kitchenware is easy to keep clean by hand washing and air drying. Like wood, bamboo needs an occasional massage with Bamboo Goo or food safe oil to keep the surface from drying or cracking.

Ceramic

Ceramic is a kitchen and earth-friendly material that can withstand extreme temperatures. In the kitchen, Xtrema ceramic cookware works hard on the stovetop, in the oven, under the broiler, or in the microwave.

Ceramic is also great for outdoor cooking; Even kid staples like homemade fish and chicken strips taste better when they are heated on ceramic. Even when it gets hot enough to blister your cauliflower pizza crust, though, ceramic won't release harmful gases or particles into your food or the air.

Glazed ceramic, which has a non-reactive finish that resists oozy disasters like melted cheese, is impervious to scratching, won't release any particles into your food, and can even go in the dishwasher. Because it is unreactive, ceramic can be used to cook and store all kinds of foods without creating an "off" flavor or leaching into your favorite recipe." (mightynest.com)

Foods you think are healthy and are really Not!

Half the time I spend in the grocery store goes to reading labels. With so many new products on the market coming out daily, along with new learnings of harmful ingredients, it seems I need to read and ensure that everything in the food item is quality and nothing is a GMO or processed of any sort. The best way to avoid all this hassle? Eat and buy everything in the fresh fruit and vegetable aisle, freezer section is great too! Make everything from scratch, and know exactly what you put in your food. It's the best way for overall optimal health.

However if you need some convenience of canned, bottled or packaged goods, please be aware of the following that you do not want to consume:

Agave Nectar

The health of agave nectar is debatable. It's a syrup that comes from the agave plant that is used as a "healthier" alternative to sugar. But is it that much healthier? Agave has a very high fructose (naturally occurring sugar, sometimes called a fruit sugar) content, which can be dangerous for the liver. Glucose can be broken down into energy by almost every cell in the body, but fructose can only be processed by liver cells. Because of how fructose is broken down by the liver, agave nectar affects the body in a way similar to high fructose corn syrup. A high fructose intake (such as that from agave nectar) puts the liver at risk for nonalcoholic fatty liver disease. This is because the liver uses fructose to create fat during a process called *lipogenesis*. This process creates fat buildup in liver cells and, over time, the liver of someone consuming too much fructose will look similar to the liver of someone who drinks too much alcohol. Fructose occurs naturally in fruits, but agave nectar has been shown to put mice at risk for weight gain and increased levels of insulin. Agave nectar can be found in products like packaged desserts such as cookies or candies. It's also common in snack bars and protein bars. Maple syrup, dates and raw honey are healthier alternatives to agave nectar. I avoid agave and suggest you do the same.

Sugar Alcohols

Sugar alcohols are popular because they are low on the glycemic index (a ranking of carbohydrates and their effect on blood sugar levels). Being low on the glycemic index means that sugar alcohols are digested and metabolized at slower rates and cause a slower rise in blood sugar levels. However, sugar alcohols still should not be consumed in large amounts. They can be irritating to the gut; research has shown that one such sugar alcohol, xylitol, can cause uncomfortable gas and bloating. Sugar alcohols include erythritol, mannitol, and sorbitol; take note if you see those on the ingredients list. You will typically find sugar alcohols in packaged food or drinks (and gum) labeled "sugar-free." A healthier alternative to sugar alcohols is the sugar substitute stevia. Which I use but not everyday, nor do I make it habit to have on hand; It's used as a treat, and sparingly.

Citric Acid

Citric acid is used as a preservative in many foods and supplements. It occurs naturally in citrus fruits like lemons, oranges, and grapefruits. Commercial citrus acid is made with a type of mold called *aspergillus niger* that, when combined with the sugars, produces citric acid. (The mold is filtered from the final version that ends up in your packaged foods.). A study in mice found that citric acid may negatively effect the brain and liver. When buying anything containing citric acid, it's important to know if it is natural or commercially produced. You can research the company to find out how they source their citric acid, or contact the company directly. Companies that prioritize quality use naturally occurring citric acid, so it's much safer to consume. Look for companies that are non-GMO certified to ensure you are avoiding genetically modified versions of citric acid. Citric acid is commonly found in packaged products since it is used as a preservative. Drinks, snack products, diet foods, sauces and dressings, and soups are just some examples of products that can contain citric acid.

Carrageenan

Carrageenan is similar to guar gum in that it's used as an emulsifying and thickening agent. It's found in a lot of dairy-free milk alternatives like almond milk, coconut milk, and soy milk and off shoot products like their yogurts, ice creams and plant based alternative dairy products. Carrageenan is made from red seaweed and has a specific chemical structure that makes it desirable for food manufacturers to use in their products. Carrageenan has a gelling effect so it creates smooth textures and emulsifies food products that would naturally separate—like dairyfree milks. But just because it makes the products texture better, doesn't mean it's good for you. A recent study has found that carrageenan may increase intestinal inflammation and disrupt digestion. It's also been shown to cause cancer. You find Carrageenan in regular milk, ice cream, and other dairy products like yogurt as well, as it thickens the product, meaning less quality product is in it and more of an enhancer.

Ensure you read this on labels and refuse to buy products that contain it. Plant based dairy items along with regular cow dairy items both contain it. So be careful which brands you choose. Also, another note on plant based dairy- do not opt for oat milk or milks made from grains- that's the same

thing as eating them... stick to coconut milk, or almond milk or macadamia milk if possible. Soy, oat and cow is a huge No Go.

“Natural” Flavors

The word “natural” is often on packaged products. There are few regulations, however, related to the term’s use. The FDA defines natural flavors as “the essential oil, oleoresin, essence or extractive, protein hydrolysate, distillate, or any product of roasting, heating or enzymolysis, which contains the flavoring constituents derived from a spice, fruit or fruit juice, vegetable or vegetable juice, edible yeast, herb, bark, bud, root, leaf or similar plant material, meat, seafood, poultry, eggs, dairy products, or fermentation products thereof, whose significant function in food is flavoring rather than nutritional.” Natural flavors can come from just about anywhere. “Natural” flavors may contain artificial and synthetic components of unknown-to-you origin; it’s hard to know if they are safe for you if you don’t know what they are. You can’t assume a naturally flavored product healthy. You will find natural flavors in a wide-variety of packaged and processed foods. My advice is to stay clear from it and don’t purchase.

Canola Oil

Canola oil is used in many packaged products, which is why it’s so important to know its dangers. The dangers of canola oil start at the seed because approximately 90 percent of the canola crop in the United States is genetically modified. Not only that, but canola oil is heavily refined, which means that it’s partially hydrogenated—using heat and chemicals to increase its level of stability to use in food manufacturing.

This is problematic for heart health as partially hydrogenated oils like canola are known for causing high levels of inflammation and calcification of arteries, which studies have shown are risk factors for coronary heart disease. Healthier alternatives to canola oil are coconut oil, avocado oil, and olive oil. Always look at the ingredients list on your food labels. If you’re buying anything that comes in a package, read those ingredients! If you see any of these seven items, it’s best to put the item back on the shelf. Food that is fresh and unprocessed is always your healthiest option. (chopra.com)

Another word on canola... its the cheapest stuff, and your French fries and fast food is all made with it. Its no surprise that we have an uptick in disease, obesity and diabetes- and these are no longer “adult” only diseases... its because the SAD (standard American diet) (also known as Western diet) includes these disease promoting ingredients. Living in Europe, I am far away from GMO’s and many other chemicals that the EU doesn’t allow- however it doesn’t mean we are in the clear. I have seen carrageenan and other harmful things in the foods here.

Did you know that the majority of the soups and hot bar items at Wholefoods are made with Canola Oil? Ironical isn’t it? A “Wholefoods store feeding their consumers food made with canola oil. Most restaurants use canola and peanut oil which are some of the cheapest oils. You won’t be able to get away from that at most restaurants, but perhaps at nice and expensive ones, you can ask for olive oil or coconut oil only if they have it.

Drinks

I start my day with a cup of warm water and lemon or lime squeezed in it. It cleans my palette and kick starts my body’s digestion, preparing it for the day. Water has many benefits on its own, but by adding lemon, you will get the added flavor and nutrients, including antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals. When you start your morning with a glass of hot water and the juice of half a lemon, you can reap the following benefits:

Rehydrates Your Body

Drinking a glass of water, especially warm water, in the morning after going hours without a sip is a good way to hydrate your body. During sleep, you typically haven’t hydrated for at least eight hours. Giving your body adequate water when you wake up is a great way to prepare your body and your mind for the day ahead.

Flushes Out Toxins

Drinking warm water with lemon in the morning is an Ayurvedic practice that helps to clear the digestive tract of toxins that have built up overnight. The liver is extremely active during sleep, since this is when your body restores and regenerates itself. Drinking lemon water in the morning allows

you to flush out the toxins that have built up over night. Additionally, in animal studies, researchers found that the citric acid in lemons protects liver function and prevents oxidative damage, helping to preserve the liver's natural ability to detoxify.

Aids Digestion and Elimination

Lemon water can help to relieve symptoms of indigestion such as heartburn, burping, and bloating. If you don't already have a bowel movement first thing in the morning, drinking lemon water may also help get things moving.

Boosts Immune System

As mentioned above, lemons contain vitamin C. When you drink lemon water first thing in the morning, it gives your body an immune boost. However, don't just drink lemon water when you start feeling sick; add it to your daily routine to help prevent disease.

Lowers Blood Pressure

Recent studies have found that daily lemon digestion is linked to lowering blood pressure, especially for people who are at high risk for high blood pressure and cholesterol.

Boosts Energy Level

Many of us rely on coffee (caffeine) in the morning to wake up, but one of the best benefits of lemon water in the morning is that it can boost your energy! I've been drinking lemon water for years first thing in the morning, and on the rare occasion where I go without it, my energy levels dip, and I notice my morning drags. Also, refraining from so much caffeine is a good idea while healing from Alopecia, giving adrenals and body a rest.

Improves Mood Staying hydrated and the vitamin C in lemons are also good for reducing the effects of chronic stress by being directly involved in the production of cortisol (stress hormone) in your adrenals. When you are under chronic stress, a common consequence is adrenal fatigue (a depletion of hormones that causes fatigue, body aches, low blood pressure,

lightheadedness, etc.). Therefore, vitamin C is essential for the recovery of your adrenal glands. Additionally, just the scent of a lemon has been found to reduce stress levels and help improve mood.

Freshens Your Breath

Who doesn't want fresh breath in the morning? This isn't to say that drinking lemon water should replace your daily teeth-cleaning habits, but it can help freshen your breath. The citric acid in the lemon contains antibacterial properties (as mentioned above) that can kill the bacteria that causes bad breath.

Improves Skin Complexion

The vitamin C in lemons also promotes collagen production, which helps produce smooth, healthy skin. In fact, in a study published in the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, researchers found that regularly consuming vitamin C led to younger-looking skin and less wrinkles.

Supports Weight Loss

Drinking water, especially warm lemon water, first thing in the morning, can help you increase your metabolism and maintain a healthy weight. Of course, drinking lemon water by itself isn't going to be a cure-all weightloss solution, but when combined with other healthy habits, lemon water helps prevent disease.

It should come as no surprise that the numerous important applications of lemons stem from their robust properties. Lemons have a lot of nutrients, and consuming lemons can bring you many health benefits. Here are just a few:

- Lemons are particularly rich in vitamin C, which is needed for many reactions in your body. We are not capable of making vitamin C internally, so we must get it from food, like lemons. Vitamin C is a powerful antioxidant, which means it protects your body from the damage of free radicals. A lack of vitamin C can lead to fatigue, stress-related problems, and a weakened immune system, so it's important to include it in your diet. Vitamin C from natural sources is recommended over a pill or tablet as

our body absorbs it better and distributes it better throughout the body.

- Lemons contain bioflavonoids, which carry out important biological tasks in your body. *Quercetin*, the most important of the bioflavonoids found in lemons, has several health benefits, including acting as a natural antihistamine, and preventing allergies and inflammation. It also contains antiviral properties and acts as an antibiotic. Quercetin has also been known to help in Alopecia and hair growth. More on that in the next section.
- Lemons have pectin, which belongs to a large group of complex carbs that are essential for digestion. Pectin can also help reduce high cholesterol.
- Lemons are a natural preservative. They are often used in salads, as they prevent discoloration of fruits like sliced bananas, apples, and avocados. They are also used in the preparation of jellies, jams, drinks, marmalades, and pickles.
- Lemons also contain calcium, which helps create stronger, healthier teeth and bones. Lemon increases flavor and improves the taste of various dishes.
- Lemons have citric acid, which is an alkalizing agent, helping to decrease acidity in your body. (chopra.com)

Other drinks I recommend are caffeine free herbal teas. Here are my top teas. They also count as drinking water, hence that's why I am drinking tea all day long. Note: I never add sugar, sweetness or anything else in my tea, drinks and coffee. Everything remains in its natural state without adding anything, to reduce sugar intake which causes inflammation. If I choose to add something, it would rarely be a splash of almond milk or cinnamon powder.

Chamomile: great for an afternoon, before bedtime tea to relax you. "It is also believed to have antibacterial, anti-inflammatory and liver-protecting effects"

Holy Basil Tea: Also known as the "Queen of Herbs" is a wonderful herbal tea that reduces stress and anxiety. According to the Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine, holy basil has antidepressant and anti-anxiety properties comparable to diazepam and antidepressant drugs. These studies examined the leaves. One study found that people who took 500 milligrams (mg) of holy basil extract each day felt less anxious, stressed, and depressed. People also felt more social.

Ayurvedic practitioners recommend drinking holy basil as tea using the leaves. And since it's caffeine-free, it's okay and even recommended to drink daily. The act of drinking tea can be ritualistic and as calming as yoga. It fosters clear thoughts, relaxation, and a sense of well-being.
(healthline.com)

Peppermint Tea: Great to freshen breath and keep a clean palette, especially after meals. "While it's most popularly used to support digestive tract health, it also has antioxidant, anticancer, antibacterial and antiviral properties"
(healthline.com)

Ginger Tea: I love ginger! In soups, stews or in tea. Ginger is phenomenal for inflammation and anti bacterial everything. It also stimulates the immune system, but it's most well known for being an effective remedy for nausea. Studies consistently find that ginger is effective at relieving nausea, especially in early pregnancy, although it may also relieve nausea caused by cancer treatments and motion sickness. It also helps with menstrual pain.
(healthline.com) For ginger tea, you don't need to buy special tea, just cut up fresh ginger, you can add some turmeric or cinnamon and change it up to make it your own version!

Yerba Mate: Is a delicious tea from South America . Yerba mate contains several beneficial plant nutrients, including:

- Xanthines: These compounds act as stimulants. They include caffeine and theobromine, which are also found in tea, coffee and chocolate.
- Caffeoyl derivatives: These compounds are the main healthpromoting antioxidants in the tea.
- Saponins: These bitter compounds have certain anti-inflammatory and cholesterol-lowering properties.
- Polyphenols: This is a large group of antioxidants, linked to a reduced risk of many diseases.

Interestingly, the antioxidant power of yerba mate tea seems to be slightly higher than that of green tea . In addition its also found to reduce risk of heart disease, lower blood sugar levels, boost immunity and aid in weight loss and belly fat, protects against infections, enhances energy, mental focus,

and physical energy. Amazing what nature can do in one cup!
(healthline.com)

Dandelion Tea: Great for bloating, prevents UTI's (urinary tract infections) and much more. Dandelion root has long been held as a "liver tonic" in folk medicine. Preliminary studies suggest this is due, in part, to its ability to increase the flow of bile. Naturopaths believe it means that dandelion root tea could help detoxify the liver, help with skin and eye problems, and relieve symptoms of liver disease. A 2017 study suggests that polysaccharides in dandelion may indeed be beneficial to liver function. If you cleanse the liver, you cleanse your body from any toxins or residues.

Matcha Green Tea: Matcha contains a concentrated amount of antioxidants, which may reduce cell damage and prevent chronic disease. It protects the liver, boosts brain function, helps prevent cancer, and much more. Matcha comes from the same plant as green tea, but since it is made from the entire leaf, it packs in a more concentrated amount of antioxidants and beneficial plant compounds. Studies have revealed a variety of health benefits associated with matcha and its components, ranging from enhancing weight loss to decreasing the risk of heart disease. Matcha and Yerba mate are my 2 drinks of choice before 2pm, since they both have stimulating effects.

Licorice Root Tea: I don't like black licorice, and don't eat the red kind either, but the tea.. oh but the tea is sweet and tasty. Licorice root is used to soothe gastrointestinal problems. In cases of food poisoning, stomach ulcers, and heartburn, licorice root extract can speed the repair of stomach lining and restore balance. This is due to the anti-inflammatory and immune-boosting properties of glycyrrhizic acid. One study found that glycyrrhizic acid can suppress the toxic bacteria *H. pylori*, and can prevent it from growing in the gut. There is also research that's shown people who have peptic ulcer disease, heartburn, or gastritis had improved symptoms. It also cleanses your respiratory system and reduces stress! Over time, stress can leave the adrenal gland exhausted by constantly producing adrenaline and cortisol. Licorice supplements can give the adrenal gland some relief. Licorice root extract can stimulate the adrenal gland, which promotes a healthy level of cortisol in the body. **You should be drinking this for the first 6 months since this helps to heal leaky gut.**

Cold or hot, I drink tea all day to support my health. Natural clean water is also important, adding a spritz of lemon and lime is how I normally drink it and recommend it.

Outside of water and water based drinks, green smoothies and protein drinks are great after a workout or meal replacement. I add vegan, or grass-fed whey protein with a minimum of 20g of protein and very low sugars and processed ingredients. Garden of Life is a favorite brand that I use and find easily in Europe and in USA. I tend to add spinach, flaxseeds, maca, cinnamon, cacao, sunflower seeds, maybe some other greens too. I am cautious with fruit, favoring berries only, such as blueberries, and using other fruits sparingly due to the sugar content. Regardless of “natural” sugar or processed, sugar is sugar, and your body doesn’t know the difference. At the end, it will process them both the same and it will turn into fat. I am careful with this and do eat the rainbow, but don’t go wild on fruit daily. I treat it like a desert from mother nature.

Avocados are fruit, however they are high in omega 3 and are very low in sugar. I can easily add avocado or almond butter into the smoothie or shake and tend to eat 2 avocados daily.

Edible Supplements

I include the following edible spices, nutrients and supplements into my diet. Many are rotating, and some are specific to hair growth and are consumed daily.

Especially for hair growth:

Eggs: Eggs are a great source of protein and biotin, two nutrients that may promote hair growth. After AIP, see if you have any aversions to it, if not fantastic, if so, then work around it.

Berries: Antioxidants can help protect hair follicles against damage from harmful molecules called free radicals. These molecules exist naturally in the body and the environment . For example, 1 cup (144 grams) of strawberries provides an impressive 141% of your daily vitamin C needs. Also, the body uses vitamin C to produce collagen, a protein that helps strengthen hair to prevent it from becoming brittle and breaking. What’s

more, vitamin C helps the body absorb iron from the diet. Low iron levels may cause anemia, which has been linked to hair loss. Eating adequate protein is important for hair growth because hair follicles are made of mostly protein. A lack of protein in the diet has been shown to promote hair loss.

Spinach: Spinach is a healthy green vegetable that's loaded with beneficial nutrients like folate, iron, and vitamins A and C, all of which may promote hair growth. Vitamin A helps the skin glands produce sebum. This oily substance helps moisturize the scalp to keep hair healthy.

Fish: Fatty fish like salmon, sardines, herring and mackerel have nutrients that may promote hair growth. They are excellent sources of omega-3 fatty acids, which have been linked to hair growth. A study in 120 women found that taking a supplement containing omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids as well as antioxidants reduced hair loss and increased hair density. Another study found that taking a fish oil supplement significantly reduced hair loss and increased hair growth in women with thinning hair.

Tip: Even after alopecia, more than 4 years later, I still take many supplements to promote health and support my immune system and body. It's not just taking supplements that will help... you need a clean diet to add to this support. They both work together. Diet and supplements.

Sweet Potatoes: These root vegetables contain high amounts of Vitamin A. Research has shown that vitamin A promotes the production of sebum, which helps keep hair healthy. What's more, vitamin A could also speed up the rate of hair growth and encourage the growth of thicker hair, all while preventing other hair follicles from regressing. Stay away from the white potatoes and add in only sweet potatoes and yams. These are the ones you want to focus your energy on for more nutrition and health benefits.

Avocados are my favorite. They are absolutely healthy for you in many ways. They are also an excellent source of vitamin E, which may promote hair growth. One medium avocado (about 200 grams) provides 21% of your daily vitamin E needs. Like vitamin C, vitamin E is an antioxidant that helps combat oxidative stress by neutralizing free radicals. In one study, people with hair loss experienced 34.5% more hair growth after taking a vitamin E supplement for eight months. What's more, avocados are a great source of

essential fatty acids. These fats cannot be produced by the body, but are essential building blocks of your cells. A deficiency in essential fatty acids has been linked to hair loss.

Nuts are a great snack and addition to any salad, soup, stir fry or just on their own! What's more, they also provide a wide variety of B vitamins, zinc and essential fatty acids. A deficiency in any of these nutrients has been linked to hair loss. Nuts have also been linked to a wide variety of other health benefits besides hair growth, including reduced inflammation and a lower risk of heart disease. Lets decipher nuts: peanuts are not nuts. They are considered legumes. What's more is that they are not healthy. I do not recommend peanuts at all - at any time- even if you don't have alopecia, because peanuts have mycotoxins, small amounts of mold, which are crushed up into the peanut butter. Over years, mycotoxins add up... and our toxin load adds up and then overflows. Avoid toxins, even small ones as much as possible. Toxins lead to many neurodegenerative diseases, autoimmune diseases and beyond.

Seeds are fantastic and nutrient rich. I primarily eat flaxseeds, pumpkin seeds and sunflower seeds. They all are loaded with vitamins, aid hair growth and overall health. I sprinkle them on plant based yogurt, put them in smoothies, salads, and eat them in trail mixes I make at home. Sweet Peppers: Sweet peppers are an excellent source of vitamin C, which may aid hair growth. In fact, one yellow pepper provides nearly 5.5 times as much vitamin C as an orange. Vitamin C helps promote collagen production, which can help strengthen your hair strands. It's also a strong antioxidant, which can protect hair strands against oxidative stress. Oxidative stress occurs when free radicals overwhelm the body's antioxidant defense system. It has been linked to hair loss and the graying of hair.

Oysters: Oysters are one of the best food sources of zinc . Zinc is a mineral that helps support the hair growth and repair cycle. A lack of zinc in the diet may promote telogen effluvium, a common but reversible form of hair loss caused by a lack of nutrients in the diet.

Shrimp: Shrimp are popular shellfish rich in many nutrients that have the potential to promote hair growth. For example, shrimp are a great source of

protein, B vitamins, zinc, iron and vitamin D. A 3.5-ounce (100-gram) serving of shrimp provides 38% of your daily vitamin D needs.

Interestingly, studies have linked vitamin D3 deficiency to hair loss. In addition, it's no surprise that the majority of my clients come from northern countries and states where they see no sunshine. On the other hand there are people who live in sunny areas but never see the sun too. Quick side note: After leaving Miami and California I noticed that D3 was extremely important to my health overall, immune health and hair health. According to Dr. Gundry, it's impossible to overdose on D3. I take high levels of D3 and in the middle of winter in the Netherlands, it's definitely sunny like Miami inside my body. I now take D3 all year round, since I am in a coat 9 months out the year. Whereas before I was in the sunshine everyday. More than likely you need a boost in D3 too. Grab a coaching call and we can discuss your supplements and what you should be taking.

Beans: Beans are a great source of protein, iron, zinc and biotin, which are all essential for optimal hair health. Together, they may aid hair growth.

Meat: Specifically, grass fed beef and lamb. Meat is a great source of protein, which is essential for healthy, strong hair. Red meat, in particular, is rich in iron, which may aid hair growth. Lamb is an excellent source of protein and vital nutrients like iron, zinc, selenium and vitamin B12. It is also immune boosting!

What you eat, effects your hair and health overall. Stick with me, we have much more to cover!

**** During this time of healing, I would recommend taking out all caffeine and alcohol. Your system could use a break. Plus added benefits would include enhanced regulated moods, and natural energy. Giving your adrenals a break will also encourage natural energy to emerge from your new lifestyle and diet. ****

If you are confused of what to take and where to start, grab a coaching call to discuss. I am happy to help!

Adaptogenic Supplements

The concept of plants with revitalizing or restorative properties that can enhance health has been around for thousands of years, although "adaptogen" is a modern word that has been used to describe them only since the 1940s. Many of the herbs that we know as adaptogens today were first used many generations ago in Ayurveda (the traditional system of herbalism in India) and in traditional Chinese medicine (TCM). Knowing some of the background on each adaptogen helps when choosing the best herb for a particular situation, and also provides context from the traditional culture, history, and customs that bring the herbs to life in daily use. Here are some of the top adaptogens I use, recommend and suggest:

Amla: Sometimes known as amalaki or Indian gooseberry, amla is a popular Ayurvedic tonic believed to prolong youthfulness, life, and good memory. It also has a reputation for increasing resistance to disease and nourishing the blood, and is considered an especially effective tonic for restoring the appetite, supporting liver health, and supporting the health of the bones, teeth, and hair. Amla is rich in vitamin C and other antioxidants. It also comes in an oil format which I use in my hair masks. More info in the hair mask section.

Ashwaganda: One of my all time favorites. I've been taking ashwaganda for over 7 years now daily. I used to have "hormonal acne"= acne that develops around the chin, neck and chin line when you are approaching or over 30 years of age. I went to many dermatologists, and they all wanted to prescribe birth control. My acne got so bad at one point I caved, and started with my birth control. Three weeks in, acne was cleared but I felt awful. I stopped right away and searched for a holistic solution. Sound familiar? Once I found Ashwaganda, and started taking it, I saw immediate results and thus my acne has not come back since. Root cause to my "hormonal" acne? Working in a high stress profession and company. Even on vacation I had to work. Hormonal balance is needed and that's why adaptogens work so well; they adapt to what your body needs.

This adaptogen has a reputation as a soothing nervine that can help anxiety, fatigue, and insomnia from stress. It is also used to support immune system health. Ashwaganda appears to enhance endocrine function, and can help support an underactive thyroid and balanced functioning of the testes and adrenal glands. It is often used in Ayurvedic formulas to support fertility and

vitality in men. Ashwaganda can also be supportive during heavy periods because it is rich in iron, and has been used in Africa as a uterine tonic for women who miscarry. Ashwaganda can stimulate the thyroid gland, so it's not ideal for people who have issues with overactive thyroid.

Eleuthero: Equally suitable for men and women, and especially beneficial for the elderly, eleuthro is gentle, supportive, and good for long-term use. It has nervine actions and offers cognitive support, aids the health of the immune system, and can support healthy cholesterol levels and heart health during stressful times. In addition to being a good everyday adaptogen, eleuthero offers support for those in highly stressful jobs, or who work long hours or have erratic schedules. It often appears to support the quality of sleep while reducing nighttime waking, but doesn't cause drowsiness during the day. It may also help lower blood sugar levels. It also supports the immune system and reduces colds. Eleuthero is an excellent adaptogen for athletes because it supports endurance, shortens recovery time, and appears to protect the immune system during hard training.

Holy Basil: A member of the mint family, Holy Basil is a natural herbal supplement for reducing stress and anxiety. Comes in tea bags if you are a heavy tea drinker, if not, take the supplement. Has no caffeine. Fights cancer and has high anti-inflammatory properties. Holy Basil is also known as tulsi, it's considered one of India's most powerful herbs, and has been used in Ayurvedic medicine for more than 5,000 years. In addition to its traditional use as a tonic, Indian folk medicine recommends tulsi tea as an expectorant for bronchitis and to ease upset stomach and vomiting. Modern herbalists mostly employ tulsi for issues related to the nervous system, including to support memory, recovery from head trauma, and as a treatment for depression. Tulsi's immune-stimulating properties also make it helpful for environmental allergies.

Rhodiola: This adaptogen is a succulent that grows in cool, northern climates. It is native to Canada, Russia, and Scandinavian countries. It's part of the official Russian pharmacopoeia as an antidepressant and nerve tonic. Traditionally, this herb was used to increase mental stamina and physical endurance, boost the immune system during winter, and supports fertility, and endocrine health in men and women. It's a natural herbal supplement for reducing stress, fights against brain fog, fatigue, depression, and insomnia, great for athletes and recovery. Rhodiola may also help balance blood sugar

levels, improve fertility and reproductive health in both sexes, strengthen the heart, and protect the heart from stress-related damage.

Licorice Root: I drink it in a tea, but also comes in supplements. As a tea, it's sweet and delicious, no caffeine. Increases energy, endurance, and boosts the immune system. Regulates cortisol, which is the stress hormone, relieves pain, aids with heartburn and acid reflux. Fights inflammation, fights skin disorders. Which the scalp is considered your skin! Can also obtain in supplement form.

Turmeric: a seasoning spice, but best taken as a supplement for better effects. Fights inflammation and is potent against cancer and has immense benefits for overall health and immunity.

**Did you know that India consumes the most amount of turmeric spice, as it's used in most curries? Did you also know that worldwide, they have the least amount of cancer. (Not a coincidence) There is a medical link to turmeric and its cancer fighting properties.*

Maca: Maca is a plant that grows in central Peru in the high plateaus of the Andes Mountains. It has been cultivated as a vegetable crop in this area for at least 3000 years. Maca is a relative of the radish and has an odor similar to butterscotch. Its root is used to make medicine. It's a type of cruciferous vegetable native to Peru.

Maca comes in a power form, either in tablet to take orally, or in loose powder form where you can add maca to soups, smoothies, and food in general. I love it in my smoothies. I also like to make warm spiced concoctions with turmeric and cinnamon and almond milk in which I would add maca to it as well. Maca enhances energy, stamina, athletic performance, and memory. People also take maca for female hormone imbalance, menstrual problems, symptoms of menopause, improving fertility, and sexual dysfunction caused by antidepressants, weak bones (osteoporosis), depression, stomach cancer, leukemia, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, erectile dysfunction (ED), to arouse sexual desire, and to boost the immune system. Its a great addition to your overall diet!

Cordyceps: is a type of fungus or mushroom that colonizes on caterpillars. It has been used in TCM to support kidney health and treat infertility, sexual

dysfunction, dizziness, and fatigue. Today, it's used mainly to boost athletic performance and immunity, and as a kidney and lung tonic.

Astragalus: Astragalus is a fundamental adaptogenic herb used in Traditional Chinese Medicine and is primarily used for longevity, to fight inflammation, and for kidney support. Astragalus also has immuneboosting properties and can activate T-cells even more than echinacea. It's also known for lengthening your lifespan!

Chaga Mushrooms: Chaga mushrooms can be found growing in the forest on birch trees resembling a large clump of dirt. But the benefits of this fungus are astounding. Those who live in Russia and Siberia have used this adaptogenic mushroom for thousands of years. Known as a folk medicine in the past, it is now being recognized in research and has shown its power in supporting cellular health. Suppresses tumor growth: Chaga is rich in antioxidants and has shown to support apoptosis (cell death). A study performed on mice in 2016 showed that using an extract of Chaga reduced tumor size by 60%. It also showed a decrease in temperature after implantation of the tumor. The decreased temperature could explain the reason Chaga suppresses cancer growth by regulating energy metabolism. Multiple studies performed on mice have shown that Chaga suppresses tumor growth in liver cancer, lung cancer and breast cancer. It can even support the immune system during chemotherapy. Reduces blood sugar levels: Many mice studies have observed a positive effect of Chaga on diabetes. Not only does Chaga lower blood glucose levels, but also cholesterol and triglycerides. Prevents DNA damage: Stress causes a substantial amount of harm to the body leading to many different diseases. Chaga has been shown to reduce oxidative stress by almost 55%. Not only is it believed to support digestive issues, it could be a beneficial supplement to reduce oxidative stress in general.

Panax Ginseng: Panax ginseng is probably the most well-known adaptogen. Traditional Chinese Medicine has used ginseng for a wide variety of treatments, especially in preventative practices and as a performance enhancer and immune booster. There are more than a dozen forms of panax ginseng. Only five of them are used medicinally, and two very popular ones are Korean red ginseng and white ginseng. There's science to back up claims about this root that resembles two legs of a human. It improves brain power,

increases sense of well being, boosts libido and sexual performance, and lowers blood sugar.

Reishi mushroom has been used for over 2,000 years in China with documented scripts of their many benefits. From boosting the immune system and reducing blood sugar to supporting the liver and fighting cancer, this mushroom is one to keep on hand, assuming you're using high-quality, medicinal-grade mushrooms — and not taking it every day. Boosts the immune system: Reishi contains antioxidants which protect cells from oxidative damage. With this protection comes the ability to be more resilient and respond to threats properly. Detoxes your system: A study of 300 one-day-old male broiler chickens fed a contaminated diet of aflatoxin (poisonous carcinogens produced by mold) showed that when Reishi was introduced to the diet, it counteracted the negative effects of the aflatoxin. This suggests that reishi is protective of the immune function and helps detox the system – especially useful when you've been exposed to allergens or toxins. Fights cancer: Studies on different types of cancer show the possibilities of Reishi as an antitumor and cancer preventative. Human prostate cancer cell lines were used to observe the effect on prostate cancer. Results showed that the cells were sensitive to Reishi, causing a 45% to 55% decrease in cells. A study of reishi on inflammatory breast cancer also showed anticancer properties with a reduced tumor growth and weight.

Siberian Ginseng: Traditional healers have used Siberian ginseng (not to be confused with panax ginseng) to fight fatigue, maximize physical performance, and improve overall immunity and longevity. Research backs their practices. Improves endurance: In one study, Siberian ginseng increased subjects' time to exhaustion by more than 500% . Fights mental and physical fatigue: Other research shows that it can improve resistance to both cognitive and physical fatigue. Boosts immune system: There's also promising evidence that this adaptogen has immunity-boosting effects and can increase t-cell count.

Saw palmetto: A natural DHT blocker that can greatly improve hair growth. Saw palmetto extracts and supplements work as hair loss remedies because they keep testosterone levels balanced. As men age, the testosterone hormone is diminished and the hormone called 5 α - Dihydrotestosterone (DHT) increases. The cause of hair loss is due to the hair follicles'

sensitivity to DHT, which is a male androgen hormone that causes follicles to shrink, resulting in a shorter life span and decrease of hair production. Normally after hairs fall out, another hair starts to grow from this same follicle — but if DHT is high, hair growth decreases. Saw palmetto has the power to stop the conversion of testosterone into DHT, making it beneficial for hair growth.

Pygeum: As a DHT blocker, pygeum bark extract is very important for men who are struggling with hair loss. Male pattern baldness is often exacerbated by the presence of dihydrotestosterone, but this supplement can block that compound from having any effect. While research is still in early stages of the comprehensive effects of this supplement, anecdotal evidence is quite convincing. Personally, I have taken supplements for men that include pygeum and saw palmetto and quercetin. Since these are all natural, and I tend to be a bit high strung, and Type A, I decided to take them. As you know I saw results and my hair has grown back. Can I say it was this alone? No. Can I say this may have contributed to my hair growth? Yes absolutely. Every bit helps and has gotten me closer to the results I wanted and achieved. More hair, less patches, and full hair growth.

Vitamins

I know some of you don't want to take supplements or vitamins- some of you think you can get all you need from diet alone. And others don't think supplements work. Well, not all, but the ones I use do work. I know many of you want specific brands and such, and that would only date this book more. If you want specific brands and help with vitamins and supplements, I can help you with a coaching call. Please note, that some supplements are not needed long term, just short term, and others are needed for life. I know budget is another issue, but if you can prevent disease, doctor bills and being on meds- wouldn't you want to? Don't you want to be in your 80's and 90's with full health and no medications? My grandma is like that- she's 84 and has reversed many things including fibromyalgia and thyroiditis and e.coli and other things... today at 84 she is independent, sharp and feisty with high energy and no meds. She takes the supplements I recommend- eats the diet I recommend and my beautiful grandma is thriving. I want to be like her... not another statistic- So keep that in mind when you want to cut corners- because its really cutting your possibilities for greater health.

Hair Skin and Nails supplements: Biotin and hair and Nail supplements are immediate go to nutrients I searched for when diagnosed with alopecia. I take supplements with a min. of 5000 MCG of Biotin but not more. More can produce negative side effects. I would recommend one that is much more complete than just Biotin. I like to save money too- so if we can make sure our supplements are high quality and take over other supplements- then it makes it worth while. For example one hair, skin and nails supplement took over my daily vitamin because it was robust, needing less of other ones.

Magnesium Glycinate: As people having varying diets, we never obtain enough magnesium in our diet. I recommend taking magnesium glycinate or Citrate as its the one that's most absorbed by the body. Others like magnesium oxide aren't fully absorbed or only partially absorbed in which you are throwing away your money. Magnesium is best taken at night, as it relaxes muscles, and it's fantastic for bowel movements, and helps you sleep well. We need magnesium for over 600 bodily functions. Fun fact, if your limbs or eyes twitch, that's a cause of insufficient magnesium. If you get legs cramps or toe cramps- lack of magnesium too! * I still take this today, we need this everyday whether you are a child or adult.

Fish Oil: If you don't eat fish or enough of it, fish oil is a must. Even eating so much fish- I would be cautious as I have come to know people who have heavy metal toxicity from eating so much fish. I learned the hard way when I moved from Miami where I was consuming fish on a daily basis to Denver where fish wasn't on the menu, rather bison and elk were, which are wonderful too, but don't provide the fatty fish nutrients my body was needing. Fish oil is needed, I take this daily, even today. Quality is needed. I recommend Nordic Naturals.

B-Complex vitamins: B vitamins aid in healthy stress management. Biotin or B7 helps thicken your hair naturally and vitamin B5 (pantothenic acid) supports your adrenal glands. B-12 many times everyone is deficient in, I still take B-12 and B Vitamins today, even though I eat meat several times a week.

Vitamin D3: The sunshine vitamin. This "vitamin" is actually a hormone and regulates our body. Having enough vitamin D is important for a number of reasons, including maintaining healthy bones and teeth; it may also protect

against a range of conditions such as cancer, type 1 diabetes, and multiple sclerosis. Vitamin D has multiple roles in the body, helping to:

- Maintain the health of bones and teeth.
- Support the health of the immune system, brain, and nervous system.
- Regulate insulin levels and aid diabetes management.
- Support lung function and cardiovascular health.
- Influence the expression of genes involved in cancer development.

Recent studies have suggested that a substantial percentage of the global population is vitamin D deficient. In the middle of winter Vitamin D3 is very important, please take note and begin to take the supplement before winter hits. Personally, I take it all year long as I no longer have options to lay out in the sun all day every week like I used to when in Miami.

Symptoms of vitamin D deficiency may include:

- Getting sick or infected more often.
- Fatigue.
- Painful bones and back.
- Depressed mood.
- Impaired wound healing.
- Hair loss.
- Muscle pain.

If Vitamin D deficiency continues for long periods of time it can result in:

- obesity
- diabetes
- hypertension
- depression
- fibromyalgia
- chronic fatigue syndrome
- osteoporosis
- neurodegenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease

Vitamin D deficiency may also contribute to the development of certain cancers, especially breast, prostate, and colon cancers.

Tip: If you just had a baby make sure you are breast feeding and taking the vitamin D3 supplement. Once baby is off the breast milk, give baby D3 supplement supporting its immune system and development.

I take 10,000 IU of D3 daily, even in summer. Rule of thumb according to Dr. Gundry is to take 1000 IU for every 25 Lbs (pounds) of weight. So if you weigh 150 lbs , you should take a min of 6,000 IU.

** There are many supplements and food I recommend for healing leaky gut, during and after. Many others that even after alopecia I still believe are necessary to take. Not all supplements are created equal. I know budget can be an issue, but buying all the cheap ones will also give you cheap ingredients like soy or other fillers including gluten.

Remember you cannot out supplement a bad diet. Diet and supplements go hand in hand.

Supplements I recommend you take now, that I take even today include:

1. Turmeric
2. Omega 3 Fish oil
3. Hair Skin and Nails
4. Magnesium
5. D3



Klaire Labs Hepatothera
Forte - Liver Detox
Support Complex with
Milk Thistle, NAC &...



\$39.95 ✓prime



Klaire Labs Vital-Zymes
Complete Digestive
Enzymes - 20 Broad
Spectrum Active...



\$45.00 ✓prime

6.Ashwagandha 7.B-12

Supplements that are known to heal the gut which I recommend you get:

Those two above helped me heal faster. I would take these one bottle each until they are finished. And take those as you are on AIP.

I would also include the licorice tea daily, L-glutamine and aloe vera, bone broth and the apple stew in my cookbook under breakfast which is fabulous because the apple pectin also helps heal the gut lining.

With the above and the AIP, you are set for true health and healing... after you need to maintain a paleo diet after you've done the reintroductions and

continue to implement everything else I mention in this book. Additional Holistic Supplements: Tinctures

Have you heard of Bach Flowers? They are tinctures that you can buy at most health food stores or natural remedy stores. Made from plants and flowers, these tinctures are safe for everyone, pregnant ladies, children and pets. “They are safe, work with homeopathy and medications.” (bachflower.com) You simply mix a couple drops with water and drink. You will feel immediate response to your ailments. Bach flowers has an array of ailments that they help: from stress, to anxiety, depression, fear, anger, and much more.

“The original Bach Flower Remedies is a safe and natural method of healing discovered by Dr. Bach from 1920 – 1930’s in England. They gently restore the balance between mind and body by casting out negative emotions such as fear, worry, hatred and indecision which interfere with the equilibrium of the being as a whole. The Bach Flower Remedies allow peace and happiness to return to the sufferer so that the body is free to heal itself. The Bach Flower Remedies are made from wild flowers and are safe for the whole family including pets. The remedies are preserved in grape based brandy and are gluten free.” (bachflower.com) For a full list of emotions, please visit bachflower.com or a local store that carries them to learn more. Personally, I keep the mini spray that’s for stress with me in my purse. If I am traveling or have something do which may upset me, then I will take a spritz in my mouth before hand.

Part 3 Inside Your Home

EMF’s

Electric Magnetic Frequencies are everywhere and are harmful. A basic point to remember is that EMFs come from all sorts of things, including your microwave, cell phone, cordless telephones, smart meters, TV and radio broadcasts, computers, power lines, fitness tracking devices, routers, and, of course, ultraviolet waves, x-rays, and gamma rays. We are practically bathed in EMFs at all times.

Major EMF Dangers:

- electromagnetic radiation may cause cancer
- electromagnetic radiation affects brain function
- electromagnetic radiation may fuel dementia
- electromagnetic radiation could cause loss of antioxidant defenses

Ways to Protect Yourself:

- Keep your phone on airplane mode when not in use or off altogether (off is better)
- Ensure wifi and bluetooth options are off when not in use, especially at night. Do not go to bed with wifi on or routers on.
- Don't keep phones in pockets, bras or pants
- Same for computers, keep them at a distance especially when using wifi, don't place them directly on your lap or body, especially when plugged in
- Use hard wired internet cables at home and office, thus not using wifi
- Unplug appliances at the home when not in use
- Avoid wifi or unplug it when not in use
- Avoid halogen or fluorescent lighting
- Keep the bedroom clear of any and all EMF's and electronics
- Avoid bluetooth headsets and use speakerphone instead
- Stop using microwave ovens
- Try Earthing- or getting back to nature- walking barefoot in the sand or grass; grounding can eliminate ambient voltage that comes from everyday appliances. I ground and earth especially after airplane travel.
- Reduce the amount of wifi appliances in the home, such as speakers, baby monitors, video games, surveillance cameras etc.

Doctors and organizations have also voiced concerns over Wi-Fi technologies in schools, where students and teachers often experience heavy electromagnetic radiation exposure throughout the entire day. Stephen Sinatra, MD, an integrative metabolic cardiologist and cofounder of Doctors for Safer Schools, says the heart is sensitive too and can be adversely affected by the same frequency used for Wi-Fi (2.4 GHz) at levels a fraction of federal guidelines (less than 1 percent) and at levels that have been recorded in schools with Wi-Fi technology. Dr. Sinatra says children in high-tech classrooms have complained of the following symptoms:

- dizziness
- racing heart or irregular heartbeat
- weakness
- anxiety
- fatigue
- feeling faint
- difficulty concentrating
- chest pain or pressure

Be cognizant and an advocate for your children's school and home. In addition, taking precautions for them and you, to not sleep with cell phones next to the bed is extremely important. Health is cumulative, it all adds up!

In addition, I would add that next steps you could take in mitigating EMF's is using faraday tents for your bed. There are many things you can do to mitigate EMF's including not allowing your children to be around cell phones and tablets so much. Researchers did a study on newborns and found that those with no emf's slept better and had better moods, those who did, has a lesser sleep quality and were antsy and more anxious in mood. In our new generation of tech, we need to be mindful of what we have, own and what we use and how much. This affects children and adults alike, however more so in children as they are developing and will eventually have more exposure than us adults who have had only the last 5, 10 or 15 years, rather a full lifetime.

Air Quality

We tend to think of air pollution as something that the outside only pertains to -- smog, ozone, or haze hanging in the air, especially in summer. But the truth is, the air inside homes, offices, and other buildings can be more polluted than the air outside. The air inside your home may be polluted by lead (in house dust), formaldehyde, fire-retardants, radon, even volatile chemicals from fragrances used in conventional cleaners, or candles. Some pollutants are tracked into the home. Some arrive via a new mattress or furniture, carpet cleaners, or a coat of paint on the walls. Air quality is an intricate part to your overall wellness. Having fresh air enter every morning is important to circulate the air. Ensure filters are changed every 6 months, and that bathrooms and moist areas are well ventilated. Mold can begin to

grow and effect your air quality if not. Plants make a great addition to any home or office, many clean the air and are hard working, taking out many toxic chemicals such as toxic gases like benzene, formaldehyde, and carbon monoxide. Links to best indoor plants for cleaner air can be found in the references section. I recently bought two Peace Lilly plants as they are extremely easy to maintain.

Ways to Improve in home air quality:

Keep Floors Clean Mop and vacuum regularly to keep pollutants out.

Keep shoes outside and a floor mat everywhere

Put a large floor mat at every door. People track in all sorts of chemicals via the dirt on their shoes. A door mat reduces the amount of dirt, pesticides, and other pollutants from getting into your home. If the mat is big enough, even those who don't wipe their shoes will leave most pollutants on the mat -- not the floors in your home. If you live in a home built before 1978, there's a good chance that lead paint still exists on your walls. But even in a newer home, you may face lead exposure -- from lead dust tracked in from outside. Lead dust can raise the risk of exposure for young children -- a serious problem that can damage the brain, central nervous system, and kidneys. Pesticides are also linked with brain damage in young children. Kids are vulnerable to higher exposures because they tend to get dust on their fingers and then put their fingers in their mouths.

To best protect your family, ask people to remove their shoes when entering your home. Keep house shoes, slippers, and socks near the door. Check for mold as this a huge cause for precursor to many diseases including autoimmune.

Keep a healthy level of humidity

Dust mites and mold love moisture. Keeping humidity around 30%-50% helps keep them and other allergens under control. A dehumidifier (and air conditioner during summer months) helps reduce moisture in indoor air and effectively controls allergens. An air conditioner also reduces indoor pollen count -- another plus for allergy-sufferers.

More tips for dehumidifying your home:

- Use an exhaust fan or crack open a window when cooking, running the dishwasher, or bathing.
- Don't overwater houseplants.
- Vent the clothes dryer to the outside.
- Fix leaky plumbing to prevent moisture-loving mold.
- Empty drip pans in your window air conditioner and dehumidifier.

Make your home a no-smoking zone

"Probably the single most important aspect of indoor air pollution is secondhand cigarette smoke," says Philip Landrigan, MD, a pediatrician and director of the Children's Environmental Health Center at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York City. Cigarette smoke contains more than 4,000 chemicals. Research shows that secondhand smoke increases a child's risk of developing ear and respiratory infections, asthma, cancer, and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). For the smoker, this addiction causes cancer, breathing problems, heart attacks, and stroke.

I've mentioned hairloss due to smoke and vaping, don't allow yourself to be around friends and family who smoke, walk away or see them when they are not doing the habit.

Test for radon

Whether you have a new or old home, you could have a radon problem. This colorless, odorless gas significantly raises the risk of lung cancer. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. today. If you smoke and your home has high radon levels, your risk of lung cancer is especially high. Radon is a radioactive gas. It comes from the natural decay of uranium found in nearly all soils. It typically moves up through the ground and into your home through cracks and holes in the foundation. Drafty homes, airtight homes, homes with or without a basement -- any home can potentially have a radon problem.

Stay away from fragrance and synthetic smells. (think candles, detergents, air fresheners)

- Look for fragrance-free or naturally-scented laundry products.
- Switch to mild cleaners that don't include artificial fragrances.
- Stop using aerosol sprays -- deodorants, hair sprays, carpet

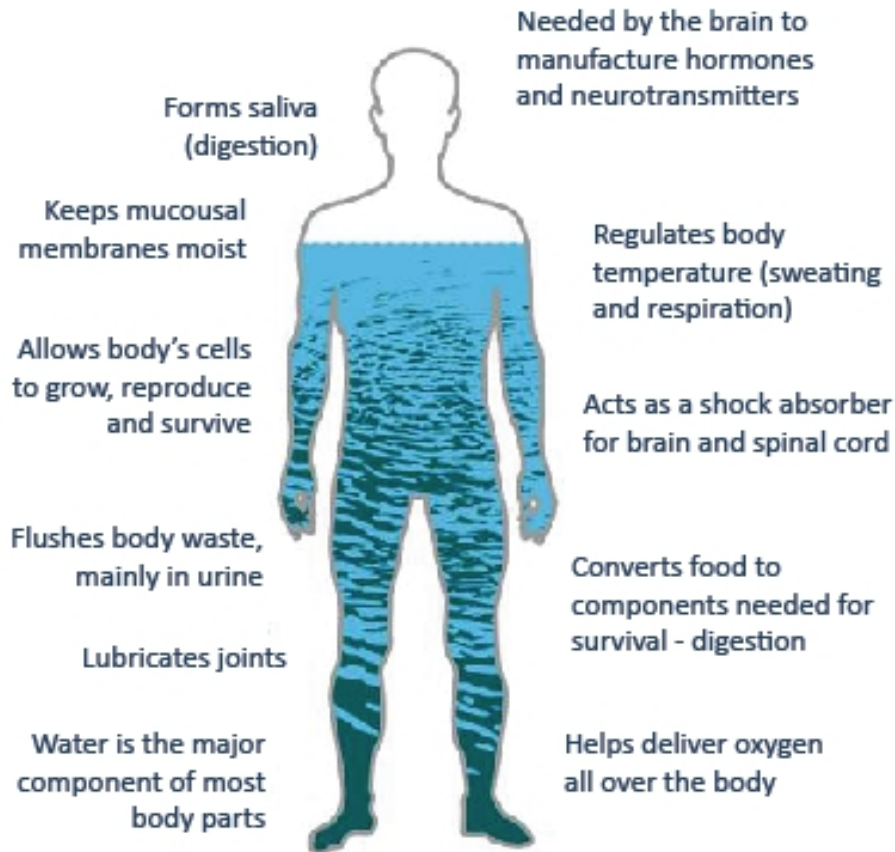
cleaners, furniture polish, and air fresheners.

- Let in fresh air. Open windows so toxic chemicals don't build up in your home. What if you or your child has pollen allergies? Then keep rooms ventilated with a filtered air- conditioning system.
- Use sliced lemons and baking soda to get a clean scent in the kitchen.
- Bring nature indoors. Any room is prettier with a fern, spider plant, or aloe vera. It's also healthier. NASA research shows that indoor plants like these act as living air purifiers -- the foliage and roots work in tandem to absorb chemical pollutants released by synthetic materials. If you have kids or pets, make sure the plants aren't poisonous if ingested.

Water

Water is life! Water gives Life! Around 75% of the human body is made of water. The human body can survive about 3 weeks or 30 days without eating but cannot survive more than 3 days without water! Water is crucial to our existence, and that's why it is uber important for us to

What Does Water do for You?



ensure we are drinking, bathing, and cooking with the best water source possible.

So what type of water should you drink?

Spring water is the best type of water we should be drinking and using because its “intact” its from the earth and has 30-40 trace minerals that the human body needs. Other spring water examples include Evian, Arrowhead Mountain Spring Water, Volvic, and Poland brands. You can also cheaply buy safe spring near you at Findaspring.com. (myersdetox.com)

Artesian Water. This is spring water. Artesian water comes from a well that is dug in the earth. When the well is dug, the internal pressure from the hole causes the water to burst forth spontaneously from the well like a fountain. Artesian water comes from a well that taps a *confined aquifer* – a water-bearing underground layer of rock or sand in which the water level is

above the top of the aquifer. Examples include Fiji brand water. (myersdetox.com)

Alkaline Water. Alkaline water has been ionized to increase its pH to between 8 and 10. Some believe that the health benefits of alkaline water are overstated, and that it has little to do with stabilizing or reducing acidity in the body, but is more of a marketing scam. A major issue with this kind of water is that there is not enough research conclusively showing the benefits actually exist. Even if many of the claims are true, the only people who really would benefit are individuals who have trouble keeping their body alkaline due to a bad diet, or people who have problems with their natural buffering systems. Alkaline water systems include the Jupiter, I-Water, Kangen, and others. Some devices pass tap water through a carbon filter, which does not remove many toxic metals and often does not even remove too many toxic chemicals because the water must move quickly through the filter. Then the water passes over electrified platinum and titanium plates to alkalize it. Platinum is a deadly toxic metal, as is titanium. Some people find that they develop extreme platinum or titanium metal toxicity after using these machines. It creates a very toxic, artificially alkaline water that still contains most tap water toxins as well. Because of this problem alone, I do not recommend these filters. (myersdetox.com)

Other water alkalizers begin with reverse osmosis water, to which coral calcium is added to make it more alkaline. This form of calcium contains toxic metals as well. Because of the nature of reverse osmosis water, the toxic metals easily reach the brain and other tissues, where they cause all kinds of health problems. Some say alkaline water is beneficial because of its alkalinity (High pH-balance) and ORP (Oxidation Reduction Potential) that makes it an antioxidant. However, the antioxidant value only lasts 18-24 hours after it's made. The higher pH will last approximately 1-2 weeks. The smaller molecule cluster size of its water will last about 1-3 months. Given these facts, bottling alkaline water makes no sense, because the health benefits are gone in such a short period. Don't waste your money. It is far better to alkalize the body with lots of vegetables, drinking spring water, and targeted supplements. (myersdetox.com)

Reverse Osmosis. This method involves passing water at high pressure through a plastic membrane with tiny holes in it. This is a common filtration

method in many bottled waters as it produces very pure water. It is used in almost all home and commercial “drinking water” machines such as those in water stores, supermarkets and health food stores. It is also used industrially in bottling plants for soda pop, soups, juices, beer and many other drinks. I bought a reverse osmosis alkaline water system for \$1100 before I had done my research. Excited about my new purchase, I drank 10 glasses of water a day. I drank more and more, drinking ten glasses of water a day for weeks. But I was still thirsty! I never felt satiated. Then I read on Dr. L Wilson’s website that reverse osmosis water does not hydrate as well as spring water. I can certainly attest to this. Since then, I have only drunk spring water and feel fully hydrated after 8 glasses a day. Reverse osmosis, sadly, is not good for drinking. In fact, it is terrible. It does not matter if someone has added minerals back to it. These things cannot undo the damage to the water that occurs due to passing it through the plastic membrane. Examples include Dasani. (myersdetox.com)

Tap Water. Tap water contains heavy metals, fluoride, chlorine, medicines like antibiotics and antidepressants and hundreds of chemicals, many of which are not even measured or regulated. Fluoride causes many, many side effects, weakening bones and increasing your chance of developing osteoporosis and cancer, yet it’s added to almost every municipal water supply in the country. Drink it if you dare. Tap water, if unfiltered, often has too many toxic metals and chemicals in it to be good for drinking. If tap water is filtered with only carbon, then it will hydrate the body and can be used for drinking, but is not usually as good as a high quality spring water. Note that carbon can remove some chlorine, but not fluorides. Since city regulators do not monitor or filter for medications, there are hundreds of medications in your tap water. Probably not a good idea to drink tap water. (myersdetox.com)

Drinking water. Drinking water comes from a municipal source, but is better known as tap water. Don’t bother paying for bottled drinking water that you can get out of your tap. Examples include Sahara and Kirkland brands. (myersdetox.com)

Distilled Water. Distilled water has gone through a rigorous filtration process to strip it not only of contaminants, but any natural minerals as well. When water is distilled, by boiling it and condensing it, all solid matter

is left except chemicals that were in the water. Most industrial distillers have methods to capture these substances to prevent them from remaining in the water. For this reason, I find that industrially distilled water is the very best. I do not recommend buying a home distiller because they cannot match the purity of industrial distillers. Spring and tap water can supply 30 or 40 trace minerals that the body needs in small quantities, but distilled water is lacking minerals rendering it inferior for this reason. Because it is devoid of minerals, distilled water grabs and holds onto minerals in the body, a process called chelation. Distilled water can be used for a few months to remove toxic metals and toxic chemicals from the body quite effectively. Drinking distilled water for longer than this, however, always results in vital mineral deficiencies. Examples of distilled water include Sparkletts and SmartWater. (myersdetox.com)

Mineral Water. Mineral water contains no less than 250 parts per million total dissolved mineral solids and is defined by its constant level of mineral and trace elements at the point of emergence from the source. No minerals can be added to the water. Examples include Panna from Italy. (myersdetox.com)

Sparkling Mineral Water. Yes, the fizzy kind. But what makes it fizzy? This type of water contains the same amount of carbon dioxide that it had when it emerged from its source. Sparkling bottled waters may be labeled as sparkling drinking water, sparkling mineral water, sparkling spring water, etc. Examples include Perrier and Pellegrino. (myersdetox.com)

Well Water. Well water can be fine, but often it is contaminated. This is especially the case if one lives in a location that was ever used for industry or agriculture. Even if your location is pristine, wells can easily become contaminated, especially with minerals such as iron and manganese. State testing laboratories cannot or will not test for hundreds of toxic chemicals and they often don't even test for contaminants such as high levels of manganese. If you have a well, try to check carefully before using it for drinking purposes. Many of my clients that drink from wells usually have manganese toxicity, but usually have others as well. (myersdetox.com)

For your home or office, consider a water filter. If you can do a whole house water filter this is best, but you live in an apartment then perhaps a kitchen

filter, under the sink and another for your shower.

Even though it's best for your body to drink spring water, it is not always practical. Installation of a home water filter system is wise for drinking, cooking, washing vegetables, and even showering. One of your best bets for clean, pure water is to simply install a high quality water filter for your entire home. A whole house carbon filter will remove contaminants from steamy chemical-laden vapors you and your family inhale while showering and washing dishes. It's wise to install a house filter because the body absorbs a substantial amount of toxins, including fluoride and chlorine, through the skin during showers and baths. (myersdetox.com) I've compiled a guide for you to figure out the best filtration system for your needs. For more information on why, how, and where to buy a filter, see EWG's Water Filter Buying Guide. Great filters and live customer service to help you choose the right system for you can be found at APS Water. Follow these steps to find out the filtration system that's right for you. (myersdetox.com)

Consider the style of water filter that will best fit your needs. Household water filters generally fall into one of two categories: point-of-entry units, which treat water before it gets distributed throughout the house; and point-of-use units, which include countertop filters (e.g. filter pitchers or countertop water cooler), faucet filters, and under-the-sink units. (myersdetox.com)

Determine what contaminants you need to remove. You may already know what chemical pollutants you want to be sure your water filter removes. But if you don't, a great place to start is to look at what kinds of contaminants are showing up in your community's drinking water. Look up your water system on EWG's tap water database. Can't find your system? Call your local water utility and ask them to send you a copy of their Consumer Confidence Report, which contains information on its testing of your system's water. (myersdetox.com)

Choose the type of filter that best fits your needs. This list was reprinted from EWG's site. (myersdetox.com)

- **Carbon/Activated Carbon:** Activated carbon chemically bonds with and removes some contaminants in water filtered through it. Carbon filters vary

greatly in effectiveness: some just remove chlorine and improve taste and odor, while others remove a wide range of contaminants including asbestos, lead, mercury and VOCs. However, activated carbon cannot effectively remove other common “inorganic” pollutants such as arsenic, fluoride, hexavalent chromium, nitrate and perchlorate. These filters come in two forms, carbon block and granulated activated carbon. (myersdetox.com)

- **Carbon Block:** Carbon block filters contain pulverized activated carbon shaped into blocks under high pressure. They are typically more effective than granulated activated carbon filters because they have more surface area of activated carbon. Their effectiveness depends in part on how quickly water flows through. A proprietary form called “Fibredyne block” claims to have a higher sediment holding capacity relative to other carbon block filters.

- **Granulated Activated Carbon:** These filters contain fine grains of activated carbon. They are typically less effective than carbon block filters because of their smaller surface area. Effectiveness also depends how quickly water flows through. (myersdetox.com)

- **Reverse Osmosis:** This process relies on a semi-permeable membrane that retains particles larger than water molecules. Reverse osmosis can remove many contaminants not removed by carbon, including arsenic, fluoride, hexavalent chromium, nitrates and perchlorate. Quality varies, both in terms of the membrane system itself and the carbon filter typically used with it. The filters use 3 times to 20 times more water than they produce, so they are usually used only for drinking and cooking water.

- **Ceramic:** Ceramic filters have with very small holes throughout the material that block solid contaminants such as cysts and sediments from passing through. They do not remove chemical contaminants.

- **Deionization:** An ion exchange process removes mineral salts and other electrically charged molecules from water. The process cannot remove non-ionic contaminants (including disinfection byproducts and other common volatile organic compounds) or microorganisms. This filtration method makes the water alkaline. (myersdetox.com)

- **Ion Exchange:** This technology passes water over a resin that replaces undesirable ions (charged particles) with others that are more desirable. One common application is water softening, replacing calcium and magnesium with sodium. The resin must be periodically “recharged” with replacement

ions. Ion exchange filters are occasionally combined with other types of filters and are used in water softeners, described below. This filtration method makes the water alkaline.

- Ozone: Ozone kills bacteria and other microorganisms and is often used in conjunction with other filtering technologies. It is not effective in reducing levels of chemical contaminants.
- UV (ultraviolet): These systems use ultraviolet light to kill bacteria and other microorganisms. They cannot remove chemical contaminants.
- Water Softeners: These devices use ion exchange to lower levels of calcium and magnesium (which can build up in plumbing and fixtures) as well barium and certain forms of radium. They do not remove most other contaminants. Since water softeners usually replace calcium and magnesium with sodium, treated water typically has high sodium content. Some people may be advised by their physicians to avoid softened water. It is also not

recommended for watering plants and gardens for the same reason.
(myersdetox.com)

No filter will give you good performance over the long-term unless it receives regular maintenance. As contaminants build up, a filter cannot only become less effective, but also make your water worse by releasing harmful bacteria or chemicals back into your filtered water. (myersdetox.com)

In my research, I've come across many different products but it was the Ultra-UC Water Filter/Revitalizer made by PureEffect Advanced Filtration that truly stood out from all other water filters. I love that they have so many different models to meet everyone's needs, including a whole house filter. (myersdetox.com) It caught my attention because the Ultra-UC Water Filter/Revitalizer made by PureEffect Advanced Filtration is the first filter I've seen that removes such a broad spectrum of pollutants, removes radiation, restores water's natural pH, isn't made in China, and is affordable for most households. And if you move, you can bring it with you. It truly is a water filter for every household. (myersdetox.com)

Water Pollutants Removed

To the best of my knowledge the Ultra-UC Water Filter/Revitalizer is the only All-In-One system of it's kind that removes:

1. Radioisotopes that get into our water from Leaking Nuclear Plants, Fukushima Fallout, and Uranium/Plutonium Mining. This is the only filter I've ever seen that removes radioactive particles.
2. Drug Residues that are not required by law to be removed at water treatment plants. This is the only filter I've seen, aside from reverse osmosis, to remove drug residues.
3. Fluoride using an all-natural alumina-free activated carbon bonded with calcium, shown to be 20% more effective at removing fluoride than the commonly used activated alumina. Fluoride blocks thyroid function! You don't want to drink this toxin added to most tap water sources in the US.
4. Disinfection Chemical Additives including both Chloramines and Chlorine.
5. Disinfection Chemical By-Products such as Trihalomethanes, one of which is Chloroform. (myersdetox.com)
6. Heavy Metals including Lead, Aluminum, Mercury, Barium, Iron & Other Positively Charged metal ions.
7. VOC's (Volatile Organic Compounds) such as benzene, xylene and other solvents that are byproducts of the petroleum industry.
8. Agricultural Contaminants such as pesticides, herbicides, and insecticides. (myersdetox.com)
9. Microbial Cysts including Giardia & Cryptosporidium, which survive disinfection
10. Sediment down to ultra-fine size of 0.5 Micron, approximately 50x smaller than a grain of beach sand. (myersdetox.com)

Plastic, Glass, or Stainless Steel?

Plastic chemicals can leach out of plastic bottles and contaminate the water, like phthalates and bisphenol-A (BPA). Then there's the issue with all that plastic trash being generated, which is wreaking havoc on our environment. Less than 30% of plastic bottles are recycled. Glass is the best option for your drinking water. (myersdetox.com)

Chemicals used to make plastic bottles may leach into the contents, especially when the contents are heated (during transport, storage, or left in your car). One of the primary concerns is bisphenol-A or BPA, a hormone disruptor that mimics estrogen in your body. Research suggests that BPA exposure is linked to an increased risk of cardiovascular disease, diabetes,

cancer, obesity, estrogen dominance syndrome and a whole host of diseases. These plastics get in your body and gum up your metabolic pathways, inhibiting health and weight loss. Time Magazine reported, “BPA is particularly worrisome simply because it is so common. Nearly every American has some amount of BPA in his or her body, in part because plastics are so ubiquitous.” (myersdetox.com)

While many plastic water bottles don't contain BPA, bottles with resin codes 3 or 7 in the recycle triangle may. However, 95 percent of all plastic products in one study tested positive for estrogenic activity, meaning they can still disrupt your hormones even if they carry a BPA-free label. Even more disconcerting is the finding that BPA-free plastics can be even more harmful than BPA plastics. Rather than BPA, a more harmful plastic hardener, BPS, may be used. BPS is found to be almost 20 times more harmful than BPA, but there is very little research into this substance. (myersdetox.com)

Consumers who switch from plastic water bottles to metal ones in hopes of avoiding the risk that bisphenol-A will leach into their beverages aren't necessarily any better off, a new study finds. Some metal water bottles leach more BPA than do ones made from the now-pariah plastic due to an epoxy-resin lining based on BPA's recipe. However, most stainless steel bottles do not have this liner. Stainless steel leaches metal into your water as well. Glass bottles, however, also leach chemicals, including aluminum, explains a study by Clemens Reimann of the Norges Geologiske Undersøkelse in Norway. Aluminum is sometimes added to soda-lime glass to make bottles more durable. Soda-lime glass is used for everyday items such as bottles for beverages, jars for food, and drinking glasses. However, it's much safer than plastic. It's the best and safest option for your drinking water. (myersdetox.com)

In summary, stop using plastic, check the water you are drinking and makes changes to enhance your health, and your families health.

Another note on water: hard water can harm your hair, especially during alopecia. Its best to have or get a water softener so that the minerals don't cause more damage and harm to your hair. I went through that personally and didn't figure it out until late in the game!

Toxins

Toxins in the home or office come in many forms, from mold, to our cleaning products, to the paint or new furniture we have, the new car smell from car seats and much more. In order to reduce your toxin load, start using soaps and cleaning products that are natural and organically made from natural ingredients. Many times using baking soda and other household items are just as effective when cleaning.

Here are a list of toxins and how to mitigate them in your home: VOC's: VOCs are a group of chemicals that vaporize easily and bring gas pollutants into the home from a variety of sources. There are over 400 compounds in the VOC family which have been identified in the home and of these over 200 can be found in carpeting. According to the EPA, VOCs tend to be even higher (two to five times) in indoor air than outdoor air, likely because they are present in so many household products.

Risks

Eye and respiratory tract irritation, headaches, dizziness, visual disorders, and memory impairment; chronic exposure increases the risk of cancer, liver, kidney and central nervous system damage. Persons with respiratory problems such as asthma, young children, elderly, and persons with heightened sensitivity to chemicals may be more susceptible to irritation and illness from VOCs.

Sources

New carpets and home furnishings, interior paints, particle board, plywood and pressed wood products, new plastics and electronics, deodorants, cleaning fluids, varnishes, shampoos and cosmetics, dry cleaned clothing, moth repellents, air fresheners, and during the burning of wood stoves and tobacco products.

How To Minimize Exposure:

Avoid Products with High VOC Content: Look for “Low-VOC” and “ZeroVOC” paints and finishes for indoor painting. Buy solid wood, hardboard or ‘exterior grade’ plywood in place of pressed wood products.

Establish a “no smoking” policy in your home. Consider buying antique furniture. Allow New Products to Off-Gas Before Bringing Them Into the Home: If you just bought a new stuffed couch, for example, unwrap it and leave it in the garage for a couple days before bringing indoors. Seal particle board or pressed wood items with varnish or paint before bringing indoors.

Ventilate: By increasing ventilation you can lower the concentration of VOCs in your home. If new carpeting or vinyl flooring has been installed, or a room freshly painted, open windows and doors, and use a house fan to direct the room air outwards.

Control Room Climate: By keeping the temperature and humidity low, you can decrease the amount of some VOCs like formaldehyde from offgassing.

Pesticides: According to the EPA, 60 percent of herbicides, 90 percent of fungicides and 30 percent of insecticides are known to be carcinogenic. Alarmingly, pesticide residues have been detected in 50 percent to 95 percent of U.S. foods.

Risks

Irritation of eye, nose and throat, damage to CNS and kidney, increased risk of cancer, Parkinson’s disease, miscarriage, nerve damage, birth defects, blocking the absorption of food nutrients.

Sources

Food (some fruits, vegetables and commercially raised meats), household pest control products and sprays, and some chemical lawn treatments which drift or are tracked indoors.

How To Minimize Exposure:

Establish A ‘No-Shoes’ Policy in Your Home: The simplest way to keep outdoor pesticides, especially lawn chemicals, from entering your home is to have family members and visitors leave their shoes at the door. This will also reduce the need for home cleaning. You can provide inexpensive slippers for guests if you think they’ll be put off having to remove their shoes.

Buy Fresh, Organic Produce: For the freshest organic vegetables, grow your own produce in a simple backyard garden. Or choose foods which are known to have fewer pesticides applied during the growing season. Free range organic eggs are available in many stores, but ask questions about the extent of the 'range'. Ideally, you may find a local farmer who can provide true free-range eggs.

Avoid Using Chemical-Based Pest Control Products in the Home: There are safe alternatives for pest control available today which can effectively control most insect pests without the need for harmful chemicals. Small amounts of diatomaceous earth, for example, will kill a variety of home insects, including fleas, while posing no harm to children or pets. Pest control products with chemical formulations should be used only where the more benign product fails to remedy the insect problem.

Use Natural Pest Control Methods for Your Lawn and Garden: A lawn that is naturally healthy will resist pests and weeds. For problems that persist, there are non-toxic weed killers and grub control products available today.

Mold and Other Fungal Toxins: One in three people have had an allergic reaction to mold. Mycotoxins (fungal toxins) can cause a range of health problems with exposure to only a small amount.

Risks There is no consensus among scientists about the health hazards of mycotoxins. Mycotoxins may have toxic effects ranging from irritation of mucous membrane, to suppression of the immune system and cancer.

Sources

Contaminated buildings, damp areas with frequent temperature changes, airborne particles from furnace blower or air conditioning unit.

How To Minimize Exposure:

- Keep filters clean on heating, ventilating, and air conditioning systems
- Remove any water sources to mold affected area; dry thoroughly
- Keep relative humidity below 60%, which may require a dehumidifier in some areas

- Store items with high cellulose content (newspapers, drywall, cardboard) in dry areas

Phthalates and PVC (Polyvinyl Chloride): PVCs contain phthalates, a class of widely used industrial compounds known technically as dialkyl or alkyl aryl esters of 1,2-benzenedicarboxylic acid. There are many phthalates with many uses, and just as many toxicological properties. These chemicals are used primarily to lengthen the life of fragrances and soften plastics.

Risks

Endocrine system damage (phthalates chemically mimic hormones and are particularly dangerous to children). Researchers have associated pregnant women's exposure to phthalates with adverse effects on the genital development of their children. These risks may even prevail in low-dose exposure.

Sources

Plastic wrap, plastic bottles, plastic food storage containers, which can leach phthalates into our food. PVC in some consumer products such as vinyl flooring, drapes and wall-coverings, baby's toys, shower curtains, blow-up air mattresses, cosmetics and fixatives.

How to Minimize Exposure:

- Check the label of baby products to ensure they are phthalate-free.
- When buying plastic products for the home, ask if they contain PVC or phthalates.
- Avoid eating food stored or microwaved in PVC plastic.
- Look for the recycling code #3 or V to spot PVC products before they enter your home.
- Look for PVC-free draperies, window blinds and shades; choose natural fibers such as cotton, linen, wood, bamboo, silk or hemp.
- Keep indoor rooms well-ventilated.

Dioxins

Chemical compounds formed as a result of incomplete combustion processes from commercial or municipal waste incineration, chlorine bleaching of pulp and paper, and from burning fuels like wood, coal or oil.

Risks

Cancer, reproductive and developmental disorders, chloracne, skin rashes, skin discoloration, and mild liver damage.

Sources

Animal Fats – Over 95 percent of dioxin exposure comes from eating commercial and conventional animal fats. (23% is from milk and dairy alone; the other large sources of exposure are beef, fish, pork, poultry and eggs. Note: Commercial/ Conventional means regular meats fed soy, grains, corn and feces... not the wild, grass-fed and pasture raised. Big difference!

In fish, these toxins bio-accumulate up the food chain so that dioxin levels in fish are 100,000 times that of the surrounding environment.) Cigarette smoke contains small amounts of dioxins. Small amounts of exposure occur from breathing air containing trace amounts of dioxins

How To Minimize Exposure:

- Avoid all conventional meat, fish and poultry
- Avoid consumption of conventional meat and dairy products.
- Avoid burning materials containing chlorine, such as plastics and

wood treated with PCP.

Heavy Metals

Metals like arsenic, mercury, lead, aluminum and cadmium, which are prevalent in many areas of our environment, can accumulate in soft tissues and fatty areas of the body, including the brain!

Cancer, neurological disorders, Alzheimer's disease, foggy head, fatigue, nausea and vomiting, decreased production of red and white blood cells, abnormal heart rhythm, damage to blood vessels.

Sources

Drinking water, some seafood like big fish example tuna (all tuna), vaccines, pesticides, preserved wood, antiperspirant, building materials, dental amalgams (silver filings), chlorine plants, lead paints.

How To Minimize Exposure:

- Install water filters.
- Use cold water for drinking, making tea or coffee, and cooking.
- Avoid fish high in mercury, such as king mackerel, tilefish, swordfish,

shark, orange roughy, tuna and marlin.

- If your home was built before 1978, check for lead paint.
- Avoid buying products made with PFC, such as Teflon cookware

and Scotchgard.

- Avoid using treated wood (CCA or ACZA) on decks or children's play structures.
- Avoid "wrinkle free" clothes and sheets and fire retardant clothes especially in children's pajamas.

Polybrominated Diphenyl Ethers (PBDEs): PBDEs are industrial toxic chemicals that have been used for over 30 years as flame- retardants. Although PBDEs are being phased out, many are still used in North America.

A growing body of research in laboratory animals has linked PBDE exposure to an array of adverse health effects including thyroid hormone disruption, permanent learning and memory impairment, behavioral changes, hearing deficits, delayed puberty onset, decreased sperm count, fetal malformations and, possibly, cancer.

Sources

Some furniture and furniture cushions, drapes, mattresses, pillows, pet beds, carpet and carpet padding, and household electronics and appliances.

How To Minimize Exposure:

- Avoid flame retardant children's clothing and sleepwear.
- When purchasing new furnishings and bedding, choose wool or

cotton fill over polyester and foam products.

- Increase fruits and veggies and reduce animal fats.
- Reduce dust levels by using damp cleaning methods.

Chloroform

This colorless liquid has a pleasant, non-irritating odor and a slightly sweet taste, and is used to make other chemicals. It's also formed when chlorine is added to water.

Risks

Cancer, potential reproductive damage, birth defects, dizziness, fatigue, headache, liver and kidney damage.

Sources Chloroform forms when chlorine, which is used to disinfect public water supplies, mixes with organic matter in the water. Air, drinking water and food can contain chloroform.

How To Minimize Exposure:

- Install low-flow showerheads, reduce the temperature of the shower water.
- Open the window or use exhaust fan when using hot water for shower or cleaning.
- Locate clothes washer in garage or area with good ventilation.

General Strategies to Reduce Toxin Levels in the Home

While it is difficult to identify a specific toxin in the home and take appropriate measures to contain exposure to it, here are some general strategies to reduce the overall level of toxins in the home:

Only Use Natural Cleaning Products in Your Home

Most health food stores will have these available or you can make your own cleaning products using safe ingredients.

Establish a 'No Shoe' Policy in Your Home

To drastically reduce the amount of pesticides and other chemicals that you may pick up outside, have visitors and family members leave shoes at the door. Residuals of toxic chemicals may last for years in carpets.

Avoid Using Chemical Pest Control Products

There are safe, non-toxic alternatives for controlling insect pests in the home, including many new non-toxic pest control products for the homeowner.

Use Toxin-Reducing Houseplants Researchers from NASA have identified certain houseplants which are useful in absorbing potentially harmful gases and cleaning the air inside homes.

Change or Clean Your Furnace or A/C Filters At least once every 1-3 months depending on use.

Switch Over to Natural Brands of Toiletries

Including shampoo, toothpaste, antiperspirants and cosmetics.

Avoid Using:

Artificial air fresheners, dryer sheets, fabric softeners or other synthetic fragrances as they can pollute the air you are breathing.

Avoid Using Lawn Care Chemicals

Residue is easily tracked indoors where chemicals can persist in carpeting and furnishings. Use natural lawn care methods which eliminate the need for chemical fertilizers and herbicides.

Have Your Tap Water Tested

If contaminants are found, install an appropriate water filter on all your faucets (even those in your shower or bath).

Use Low-VOC Paints, Caulks, Sealants, Finishes, and Carpeting Look for low-VOC labelling on sealing and finishing products. Most major paint brands now carry 'low' and 'zero' VOC lines for interior painting. For a list of non-toxic paint suppliers, [click here](#).

Ventilate

Modern homes and business are created to be leak proof; meaning, toxins are sealed in and fresh air is sealed out! To ventilate indoor air in winter, open doors and windows on opposing sides of the room to facilitate air flow, and close them in 5 – 10 minutes. The furnishings, drywall and any stonework will retain residual heat and restore room temperatures quickly. (eartheasy.com)

Natural Ways to Rid Your Home of Toxins

Non-toxic, organic cleansers are inexpensive and can be made at home using the following ingredients:

- Purified water: Free of chemicals and contaminants
- Vinegar: Contains natural acid and antibacterial elements to eliminate and disinfect
- Baking soda: Lifts stains, brightens, and deodorizes
- Peppermint: Has antibacterial and insect repellent qualities
- Lemon juice: Kills mildew, mold, and eliminates odors
- Essential oils: Provide natural, non-toxic fragrances
- Castile soap: Naturally olive oil-based

Cleaning Your Toilet

This recipe will help disinfect and clean your toilet. Add a spritz of lemon afterward for a fresh smell.

- 1 cup baking soda
- 2 cups white vinegar

Pour the baking soda into the toilet, follow with the vinegar. This combination will bubble and fizz. When the reaction subsides, scrub your toilet with a toilet brush.

Sink & Tub Scrub

This recipe is a great, natural way to keep sinks and tubs clean.

- 1 cup baking soda
 - ½ cup castile soap
 - 3-4 drops tea tree or peppermint essential oil
- Place the baking soda in a bowl. Slowly add the soap until the mixture thickens. Add in a few drops of tea tree or peppermint essential oil. Scoop the mixture onto a sponge or damp cloth and give your bathtub and sinks a good scrubbing.

All-Purpose Spray

This spray can be used on just about anything. Do yourself a favor and always keep a bottle handy.

- 1 cup white vinegar
- 2 cups water
- 1 tablespoon castile soap
- 3-4 drops essential oil of your choice

Combine all of the ingredients in a spray bottle. Spray on any areas that need a good cleaning. The vinegar, which is antibacterial, will help remove mildew and mold.

Clog Remover

Foul-smelling clog removers can leave residual toxins in your drain and they're harmful to inhale. This organic recipe works just as well and is a safe way to resolve a clogged drain.

- ½ cup baking soda
- ½ cup white vinegar
- Gallon of hot water

Pour the baking soda down the drain, follow it with the vinegar. Let it fizz for 10 minutes then pour a gallon of boiling water down the drain. Repeat with more water if necessary. If the clog persists, use a drain snake from a hardware store.

Mirror Polish Chemical-based glass and mirror cleaning products release toxins into the air, so a natural cleaner is best. This recipe is effective and streak-free.

- White vinegar
- Newspaper

Spritz some white vinegar on a mirror and wipe with a crumpled newspaper until clean.

Natural Air Purifiers

Certain types of plants can reduce toxic chemicals such as trichloroethylene, benzene, formaldehyde, carbon monoxide, and xylene.

Putting these plants strategically throughout your house and yard is a natural, effective way to maintain a healthier home environment.

- Aloe vera
- Mother-in-law's tongue
- Purple waffle plant
- Golden pothos
- Rubber plant
- Areca palm
- Peace lily
- Money plant
- English ivy
- Red-edged dracaena
- Spider plant

Using plants as a natural means to detoxify the air in your home is ideal. However, if you are allergic to certain plants, or your home environment makes it difficult to use plants, electric air purifiers can reduce the pollutants and allergens in your house.

The best plants for repelling insects (perfect for your garden) include:

- Basil
- Lemon balm
- Citronella
- Lavender
- Catnip
- Peppermint
- Marigold

Since birth we are accumulating toxins. There was a study done by the Environmental Working Group - they found over 270 chemicals in the umbilical cord of newborns. Imagine, our world is becoming a toxic soup due to all the chemicals we encounter on a daily basis. Our children, before they can even breath their first breath are exposed to over 20 chemicals. The EU does a better job than the USA in protecting its population from pesticides, and chemicals. However more work can be done, and if not coming from officials and governments, then you need to school yourself on what's going on in your community. There was a PBS Nova documentary on

*the Flynt Michigan tap water situation - which so happened also occurred in Washington DC , 9-10 years earlier. The same scientist who discovered the situation in DC, discovered it in Michigan. Officials and local authorities wanted to cover it up, and deny it at all costs; the community was losing their hair, having diseases and liver damage. Even with all the facts in hand, government wanted to negate this was actually happening. Three years into it, they confessed and now the whole city still lives off of plastic water bottles; think about the cost not just in health care, but in lives, in health and the longterm effects of having high amounts of lead can do to you and your family. We cannot count on others to protect us; that is up to us! If you are interested in learning more- there is a documentary series I recently watched called **Dirty Money** which takes a hard look at certain industries and how they get away with damaging our health and planet for profit and convenience. Toxins have a cumulative effect on our bodies, its called a “rain barrel” effect. When we continuously harm our bodies and accumulate toxins it gets to a point that the last bit of toxins in this ran barrel effect, then cause diseases. Hence, the uptick in autism, autoimmune diseases, cancer and others— all due to diet and lifestyle. Let’s focus on things we can control, including our exposure to the many toxins to get healthier and reverse alopecia.*

Part 4 Inside You

Self Care

Self-care is a broad term that encompasses just about anything you do to be good to yourself. In a nutshell, it’s about being as kind to yourself as you would be to others. It’s partly about knowing when your resources are running low, and stepping back to replenish them rather than letting them all drain away.

Meanwhile, it also involves integrating self-compassion into your life in a way that helps to prevent the possibility of a burnout. However, it’s important to note that not everything that feels good is self-care. We can all be tempted to use unhealthy coping mechanisms like drugs, alcohol, over-eating, and risk-taking. These self-destructive activities help us to regulate challenging emotions, but the relief is temporary. The difference between

unhealthy coping mechanisms and self-care activities is that the latter is uncontroversially good for you. When practiced correctly, selfcare has long-term benefit for the mind and body.

Top 5 Benefits Of Self Care

- *Better productivity.* When you learn how to say “no” to things that over-extend you and start making time for things that matter more, you slow life down in a wonderful way. This brings your goals into sharper focus and helps you to concentrate on what you’re doing.
- *Improved resistance to disease.* There is evidence that most selfcare activities activate your parasympathetic nervous system (PNS). What this means is that your body goes into a restful, rejuvenating mode, helping it to fortify its immune system. So, with better selfcare often comes fewer colds, cases of flu and upset stomachs.
- *Enhanced self-esteem.* When you regularly carve out time that’s only about being good to yourself and meeting your own needs, you send a positive message to your subconscious. Specifically, you treat yourself like you matter and have intrinsic value. This can go a long way toward discouraging negative self-talk and your critical inner voice.
- *Increased self-knowledge.* Practicing self-care requires thinking about what you really love to do. The exercise of figuring out what makes you feel passionate and inspired can help you understand yourself a lot better. Sometimes, this can even spark a change in career or a reprioritization of previously abandoned hobbies.
- *More to give.* When you’re good to yourself, you might think you’re being selfish. In truth, self-care gives you the resources you need to be compassionate to others as well. Giving compassion is a bit like filling a bucket; you can’t fill someone else’s if you don’t have enough of your own!

One of the main excuses people make for ignoring articles about selfcare is *that they just don’t have time*. The great news is that there are many different self-care practices, and none of them are especially difficult or require a lot of planning. The trick is to find some that you genuinely enjoy and that fit with your life and values. Once you start adding emotional self-care to your life, you’re likely to become fiercely protective of that time and wonder how you ever managed without it! Here are the five main categories of self-care, along with explanations of how they help you. We’ll also look at specific

self-care examples within categories, which should get you thinking about activities you'll particularly like.

Sensory

Sensory self-care is all about helping to calm your mind.

When you are able to tune into the details of the sensations all around you, it's easier to live in the present moment. And when you're in the present, you can more effectively let go of resentments related to the past or anxieties about the future. When you think about practicing sensory self-care, consider all of your senses: touch, smell, sound, and sight. Most people are more responsive to one than the others, so ask yourself what that sense might be for you.

Sensory Self-Care Ideas

- Cuddling up under a soft blanket.
- Going to the countryside and focusing on the smell of the air.
- Watching the flames of a candle or a fire.
- Feeling the water on your skin during a hot bath or shower.
- Focusing on the movements of your own breathing.
- Lying down and listening to music with your eyes closed.
- Sitting in the heat of the afternoon sun.
- Having a small square of the most delicious dark chocolate (85% or

higher)

- Walking barefoot in the grass.
- Having a massage with essential oils.
- Holding a pet in your arms.
- 'Tree bathing', or walking through an area of many trees or a forest.

Emotional

When it comes to your emotional health, one of the best self-care tips is to make sure you fully engage with your emotions. When you face them head-on, this actually helps with stress. You may feel tempted to push down feelings like sadness or anger, but it's healthy to feel them, accept them, and move on. Remember that emotions are not "good" or "bad" in themselves. You are not blameworthy for the emotions you feel; only how you behave in

response to them. On this theme, consider any one or more of the following if you want to practice better emotional self-care.

Emotional Self-Care Ideas

- Keep a daily journal, and be totally honest about your feelings.
- Practice gratitude and list or say 5-10 things you are grateful for daily
- See a therapist, even if it's just for 8-10 sessions of general personal development.
- Write a list of "feeling words" to expand your emotional vocabulary.
- Make time to be with a friend or family member who truly understands you, at the least give them a call if long distance or FaceTime.
- Let yourself cry when you need
- Deliberately encourage yourself to laugh with old memories or funny videos.
- Sing along to the song that best expresses your current emotions.

Spiritual

If you're not religious, you might be tempted to skim-read this section or skip it altogether. However, spiritual self-care isn't just about believing in a deity. It's applicable to atheists and agnostics as much as to religious people. Spiritual self-care is about getting in touch with your values and what really matters to you. Self-care tips for depression often stress that developing a sense of purpose is vital to your recovery. Below are some versatile examples that can help you with this.

Spiritual Self-Care Ideas

- Keep up a daily meditation or mindfulness practice.
- Attend a service, whether it is religious or humanistic.
- Read poetry.
- Walk in nature and reflecting on the beauty around you.
- Make a daily list of 5-10 things that make you feel grateful.
- Be creative, whether through art, music, writing or something else

entirely.

- Make a list of 5-10 things that make you feel alive, then ask yourself

how you can better incorporate these things into your life.

- Say affirmations that ground your sense of self and purpose.
- Go on a trip with the sole purpose of photographing things that inspire you.

Physical

The importance of self-care definitely extends to purely physical aspects of your health. Physical activity is vital not only for your bodily well-being but also for helping you let off steam. You might think there's nothing fun or self-compassionate about going to the gym, but that's far too narrow a way of thinking about physical self-care. Instead, broaden the concept by thinking about the following lists.

Physical Self-Care Ideas

- Dance to your favorite songs
- Do yoga. Even if you've never tried it, there are poses that are perfect for beginners.
- Join a class and learn a new sport.
- Go running with your dog
- Cycle through the countryside.
- Simply go for a walk.

In addition, remember that physical self-care is as much about the things you don't do as the things you do! So:

1. Nap when you need to. Just 20 minutes can make you feel mentally and physically refreshed.
2. Say "no" to invitations when you're simply too tired to enjoy them.
3. Don't push yourself to do your exercise routine when you're run down or unwell.
4. Commit to 7-9 hours of sleep per night, barring exceptional circumstances.

Social

Finally, social self-care is another category that's important for us all. It might look different depending on whether you're an introvert or extrovert.

However, connecting with other people is necessary for happiness for a large diversity of people. It helps you to understand that you're not alone. Plus, it can also give us a sense of being fully "seen" by others. This can, in particular, help us combat loneliness and isolation. Social self-care isn't about just doing things with others for the sake of it, but about choosing to do things with people who really make you feel good.

Social Self-Care Ideas

- Make a date to have lunch or dinner with a great friend.
- Write an email to someone who lives far away, but who you miss.
- Reach out to someone you like but haven't seen in a while.
- Consider joining a group of people who share your interests.
- Stop socializing with those who undermine or disempower you.
- Strike up a conversation with someone interesting.
- Join a support group for people who struggle with the same things

you do.

- Sign up for a class to learn something and meet new people at the same time. Ideas include cooking, yoga, salsa dancing, taking up a new language, knitting, book club and photography.

Personally, when I think of self care, I think of beauty rituals, using face masks, hair masks, and doing my nails. Massages and baths with candles are fantastic too! Indulge in these things that can be done with friends on the weekend or solo at home using natural products of course!

Most household products, whether they're cosmetics, hygiene products, or cleansers, contain chemicals that are linked to health issues, including:

- Reduced sperm count
- Hormone disruption
- Thyroid and reproductive issues
- Headaches
- Liver and kidney issues
- A weakened immune system
- Respiratory complications
- and much more!

Staying clean and looking your best may not be as beneficial as you think if the products you use contain harmful chemicals. It's important to know which products need to be replaced or avoided. **The following are the hygiene and beauty products most likely to contain toxic chemicals:**

- **Deodorant**
- **Perfume and cologne**
- **Soap (including antibacterial soap) and detergent**
- **Makeup and cosmetics**
- **Mouthwash and toothpaste**
- **Moisturizer and sunscreen**
- **Shampoo and other hair care products**
- **Nail polish and nail polish remover**

Maintaining a healthy home is key to living a healthy life, and the only way to accomplish this is by thoroughly vetting the products you're considering introducing to your home. To minimize your exposure to toxins and their effects, check the labels on hygiene and beauty products for these harmful chemicals:

- Ammonia
- Mica
- Chlorine
- Fluoride
- Triclosan
- Petroleum jelly
- Sodium hydroxide
- DBP (Dibutyl phthalate)
- DEA (Diethanolamine)
- PTFE (Polytetrafluoroethylene)
- SLS/SLES (Sodium lauryl sulphate)
- Formaldehyde (DMDM hydantoin, diazolidinyl urea, imidazolidinyl urea)
- BHA/BHT (Butylated hydroxyanisole, butylated hydroxytoluene)
- Coal tar dye (P-phenylenediamine)

I highly recommend going green for all products. If budget is an issue, be penny wise and make some of the cleaners and natural body lotions at home. With a quick google search you can find a plethora of ideas for scrubs made out of sugar and coffee, or lemon, lavender and salt. Same for face washes, creams, lotions, household cleaners and much more! Yes it might take a little time and effort, however the savings are amazing and you know exactly what's being used. Rest assured you will feel ten times better when your body starts using natural products that can be shared amongst everyone in your household.

Another option to check how your current products stack up is to visit ewg.org and they have info on how they rank beauty products, cleaning products and even foods that are a must to have organic. I understand everyone wants to be cautious with your money, but as an old boss once told me, you don't trip over the pennies to get to the dollar. Don't underestimate what natural products can do to improve your health and reduce your toxin load. Personally, I stopped using nail polish for the last 3-4 years now, I was already on the natural band wagon, using organic shampoos and conditioners, I stopped using deodorant back in my 20's and so on. I have curly hair so I try to use natural products too for that. Toothpaste and cleaners are always free of chemicals, same with lotions, soaps and face creams. Make up as well is non toxic and natural. Once you get into this habit, you will feel better, less sick and really, it's better for you, your family and the environment.

Toxins are big thing now, because more and more we see lawsuits and companies being exposed due to their products causing cancer. (Johnson and Johnson baby powder, Monsanto's/ Bayer's weed killer Roundup, Monat Hair which causes hairloss, Deva Curl Hair Products which has been found to cause hairloss and so many more)

Many things cause hairloss to happen. Diet and Lifestyle are crucial to healing and getting healthier however you may also have underlying issues such as mold toxicity, heavy metals from water or fish or build up over the years. It can also be hormonal (menopause) or part of your thyroid issue if you happen to have Hashimoto's or another thyroid autoimmune disease. In addition, if you have a parasite, pathogen, giardia, yeast over growth like candida or like another client had H. Pylori or Lyme disease, this can all

trigger an autoimmune response as well. A stool test and/or Hair Mineral analysis can assist with this and in which I would recommend as a next step should you not see results with my program. Many times it can be something like the above mentioned items that are hindering our process towards success. After you clear it up, make sure you stick to these diet and lifestyle changes as from there you will see the health results you are looking for!

Another toxin we don't give much credence to are over the counter medications and antibiotics. I understand sometimes medicine is needed, but when I see patterns of my friends or family members taking over the counter medicines on a daily, weekly or monthly basis for that nagging headache, or PMS (premenstrual syndrome) or anything else in between that can easily be alleviated naturally... yet we want a quick fix and reach for pills. The USA has a bad track record for this and so did I. I realized my monthly Advil was hindering my health and causing more damage and harm long term. Be mindful of constant use of NSAIDS and over the counter drugs as these too effect your gut health. Research shows that children that have high exposure to NSAIDS and over the counter meds along with antibiotics see more issues in health overall due to gut health. Gut health houses 70-80% of your immune system. This is why it's so critical to keep it healthy. If your immune system is comprised or low, always look to the gut!

Other toxins come from prescriptions and birth control as seen in my blog posts, which can cause hairloss and cause copper toxicity depending on the birth control you've been on. In addition, birth control also depletes you of many vitamins in minerals, including Vitamin D.

Essential Oils

Essential oils are another tool to help in cleaning, or relaxing or having a natural scent diffused within the home.

My mother uses an old pot, hopefully maybe one you are going to exchange for a healthier version, and puts in cinnamon sticks, water and orange and lemon peels in it and boils it on low. The scent of clean with warmth from the cinnamon, is a natural deodorizer that is spread throughout the house and is a lovely smell. She often times changes it up and adds eucalyptus leaves or lavender flowers. Another idea is leftover rosemary or thyme leaves.

Another air purifier method is to use sage. Dried sage can be burnt and takes out 94% of toxin in the air. Remember to air out the smoke after going around the house with the dried sage bundle which resembles a joint. Ancient native cultures used dried sage for dispelling bad vibes and cleansing the home. Here too, we do the same.

Hair Care During Alopecia

Alopecia has caused me to have itching at times, especially by day 3 of not washing my hair, so I have found that placing a few drops of rosemary or lavender essential oils has stopped the itching and in turn creates circulation and hair growth in the area. I also mix the oil with a carrier oil like coconut oil.

What's more, I also put in rosemary, lavender and clary sage in my organic, no sulfates or no parabens shampoo bottle so that the circulation can increase with the follicles with every shampoo. Truth be told I normally add in a full bottle of essential oil, around 20-30 ml to each shampoo and conditioner bottle. Smells amazing but also good for creating and promoting more hair growth and circulation.

The 7 Best Essential Oils for Hair

Lavender Studies have shown that lavender oil possesses hair growth-promoting effects. In a 2016 animal study, topical application of lavender oil proved to significantly increase the number of hair follicles in female mice. Lavender oil was also able to deepen the depth of hair follicles and thicken the thermal layer. (1) Lavender oil has antimicrobial properties, and it can be used to combat bacterial and fungal disorders. Some other lavender oil benefits are its ability to soothe the scalp and heal dry skin and hair. Plus, because emotional stress is a factor that can contribute to thinning hair, lavender oil can be used to create a tranquil and stress-free environment.

Rosemary

Rosemary oil is one of the top essential oils for hair thickness and growth. It is used to increase cellular metabolism, which stimulates hair growth and promotes healing. Research even shows that rosemary oil appears to work as

well as minoxidil, a conventional topical hair loss treatment. When it comes to boosting your hair health, the benefits of rosemary oil also include preventing baldness, slowing the graying process and treating dandruff and dry scalp.

To use rosemary oil for your hair, take 3–5 drops and mix it with equal parts olive oil, and then massage the mixture into your scalp for about two minutes. Leave it in your hair for 3 to 4 hours, and then wash your hair as usual.

Chamomile

Chamomile oil is a great essential oil for hair because it adds shine and softness to your hair while soothing your scalp. Did you know that chamomile essential oil can be used to lighten your hair naturally? Combine 5 drops of chamomile essential oil with a tablespoon of sea salt and one-third cup of baking soda. Use warm water to create a paste and apply the mixture to your hair. Massage it into your scalp and at the base of your hair, then allow it to sit for about half an hour before rinsing it out. If you want a bolder affect, keep the paste on as you sit in the sun. Research suggests that 50 percent of women dye their hair regularly and feel more attractive right after having their hair dyed, but conventional hair products that are used to lighten hair contain dangerous chemicals that can cause numerous health risks. Choosing a natural alternative will ensure that you aren't being exposed to unhealthy hair dyeing products like formaldehyde and bleach.

Cedarwood

Cedarwood is used to help stimulate the hair follicles by increasing circulation to the scalp. It can promote hair growth and slow hair loss; it can also treat thinning hair and various types of alopecia. A study conducted in Scotland involved 86 patients who were randomized into two groups — one group massaged a combination of cedarwood, thyme, rosemary and lavender oils in a mixture of jojoba and grapeseed carrier oils into their scalps daily. The control group used only carrier oils daily. After 7 months, 44 percent of patients in the essential oil group showed improvement of alopecia symptoms, while only 15 percent of the control group showed improvements. Cedarwood essential oil can also help to reduce skin

irritations and repel bugs, which can be beneficial on summer nights when you're spending time outdoors. Cedarwood can be applied topically to the scalp and hair. It mixes well with gentle oils like lavender and carrier oils like coconut oil. You can also add 2–3 drops of cedarwood oil to your homemade conditioner.

Clary Sage

An important ester in clary sage oil called linalyl acetate reduces skin inflammation and regulates the production of oil on the skin. Clary sage also works as a natural remedy for rashes, and it works as an antibacterial agent. But maybe most importantly, clary sage can be used to help you relieve stress and balance hormones. Three types of hair loss can be associated with high stress levels: telogen effluvium, trichotillomania (hair pulling) and alopecia areata. Because clary sage can be used to help relieve stress and reduce cortisol levels in the body, it works as a natural remedy for stress-induced hair loss.

Clary sage works well with jojoba oil; the two can help to regulate oil production on the skin, helping you to avoid scaly or flaky patches that lead to dandruff. To ease stress, which is associated with hair loss, you can diffuse clary sage oil at home or apply a few drops to your wrists, temples and bottoms of your feet.

Lemongrass Oil

Lemongrass essential oil has healing properties, and it works as an effective cleanser and deodorizer. It can strengthen your hair follicles and soothe an itchy and irritated scalp. In fact, a 2015 study found that the application of lemongrass oil reduced dandruff significantly after seven days and increased the effect even more after 14 days of topical application. Some bonus benefits of lemongrass oil include its ability to work as a natural bug repellent, relieve stress (which is associated with hair loss) and treat headaches.

You can add 10 drops of lemongrass oil to your bottle of shampoo or conditioner, or you can massage 2–3 drops into your scalp along with your

conditioner daily. Lemongrass oil can also be diffused at home to reduce stress and detoxify the space.

Peppermint

Peppermint oil helps to stimulate the scalp, and it can treat dandruff and even lice due to its powerful antiseptic properties. Research shows that peppermint oil promotes hair growth, too. In a 2014 animal study, topical application of peppermint oil for four weeks showed prominent hair growth effects, increasing dermal thickness, follicle number and follicle depth.

Peppermint has a pleasant cooling sensation when applied topically, and it helps calming effects help to reduce skin inflammation. In addition to these peppermint oil uses, it also works to energize your mind, boost your mood and relieve tension or headaches. Add 2–3 drops of peppermint to your shampoo or conditioner for a quick wake-me-up during your morning shower.

How to Use Essential Oils for Hair & Homemade Recipes

All of these essential oils for hair are easy to find online or at your local health food store. It is very important that you only purchase essential oils that are 100 percent pure grade, especially when you are ingesting the oil or applying it topically. It's also a good idea to do a patch test with any essential oil that you're using for the first time. Because essential oils are so potent, they should be diluted with a carrier oil before topical application. Some beneficial carrier oils for hair include:

Coconut Oil — Coconut oil contains medium-chain fatty acids, including lauric acid and capric acid, that have strong antiviral, antimicrobial and antifungal properties. These properties help to thoroughly clean your hair and scalp, thereby helping to prevent and treat issues like dandruff.

Jobba Oil — Jojoba oil encourages hair growth and moisturizes the scalp. It works as an emollient, soothing the skin and unclogging hair follicles.

Olive Oil — Olive oil is a source of vitamin E and other antioxidants. Some olive oil benefits include its ability to hydrate and soothe the skin, working to get rid of dry scalp and dandruff. You can simply combine your essential

oils for hair and a carrier oil of your choice and massage the mixture into your scalp. You can also add essential oils to your everyday shampoo or conditioner as I have mentioned that I do!

Sleep

According to the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute,” Sleeping is a basic human need, like eating, drinking, and breathing. Like these other needs, sleeping is a vital part of the foundation for good health and wellbeing throughout your lifetime. Sleep deficiency can lead to physical and mental health problems, injuries, loss of productivity, and even a greater risk of death.”

Getting more sleep reduces stress and cortisol, which is the stress hormone, and holds on to weight for you, not allowing your body to lose weight because its in a “fight or flight” mode. Take naps if possible, and at least, get 8-9 hours a night and try to go to bed early.

Sleep deficiency is linked to many chronic health problems, including heart disease, kidney disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke, obesity, and depression.

Sleep deficiency also is associated with an increased risk of injury in adults, teens, and children. For example, driver sleepiness (not related to alcohol) is responsible for serious car crash injuries and death. In the elderly, sleep deficiency might be linked to an increased risk of falls and broken bones. (nhlbi.nih.gov)

In addition, sleep deficiency has played a role in human errors linked to tragic accidents, such as nuclear reactor meltdowns, grounding of large ships, and aviation accidents.

A common myth is that people can learn to get by on little sleep with no negative effects. However, research shows that getting enough quality sleep at the right times is vital for mental health, physical health, quality of life, and safety.

One of the most important items in your bedroom is the mattress on which you sleep. Foam mattresses—including baby and children’s mattresses—

have become very popular over the last decade but may hold toxic flame retardants. When these chemicals are released, they can be inhaled and negatively impact your body's ability to heal and detoxify. Look for a non-toxic mattress made with organic stuffing and without flame retardants. Additionally, mattresses should never be placed on a pressed wood or plywood bed frame. These two types of wood are notorious for releasing formaldehyde and other chemicals.

We can't talk about mattress toxins without mentioning dust mites. These microscopic creatures are potent allergens. A member of the spider family, mites feast on human skin flakes and leave their excrement in your mattresses, pillows, sheets, furniture, and drapes. Regularly cleaning these areas can reduce your exposure to these organisms and alleviate the respiratory issues they cause. For next-level protection, get a protective cover for your mattress and wash your sheets every three days with fragrance- and chemical-free laundry detergent.

The comfort of your bed is essential to good sleep. Make sure you change the mattress every 8 years, and that the pillows, sheets, and mattress are all comfortable for you. One study looked at the benefits of a new mattress for 28 days. They found it reduced back pain by 57%, shoulder pain by 60%, back stiffness by 59% and improved sleep quality by 60%. Other studies also found that new bedding can enhance sleep. Additionally, poor-quality bedding can lead to increased lower-back pain.

If you are having issues sleeping:

- remember to take your magnesium glycinate at night
- diffuse lavender essential oils in your bedroom
- keep your bedroom dark and cool, temperature and light effect sleep
- ensure you are off all electronics 2 hours before bed time
- take some chamomile tea or "sleepy time tea" at night to help get

sleepy

- before bed, take a warm bath or shower with lavender body wash or lavender soap, easing into the evening
- have you tried sleeping with white noise? or sounds of the ocean or rain?

- keep all electronics out of the room, even alarm clocks (you can hear it if in the bathroom or room next door, or just outside your bedroom)
- try to exercise in the morning or early afternoon, not at night
- have your last cup of caffeine before 2pm. Caffeine stays in your system for at least 6 hours if not more
- Take melatonin at night for a sleep aid. You can find it in the natural food store. You won't get addicted as it not habit forming. Its all natural!

Several supplements can induce relaxation and help you sleep, including:

- Ginkgo biloba: A natural herb with many benefits, it can aid in sleep, relaxation and stress reduction. Take 250 mg, 30–60 minutes before bed
- Glycine: A few studies have found that 3 grams of the amino acid glycine can improve sleep quality.
- Valerian root: This root is backed by several studies that show it can help you fall asleep and improve sleep quality. Take 500 mg before bed
- Magnesium: Responsible for over 600 reactions within the body, studies show magnesium can improve relaxation and enhance sleep quality
- L-Theanine: An amino acid, l-theanine can improve relaxation and sleep. Take 100–200 mg before heading to bed
- Lavender: A powerful plant-based supplement with many health benefits, lavender can induce a calming and sedentary-like effect to improve sleep. Take 80–160 mg containing 25–46% linalool
- Try therapy. If insomnia is really plaguing you and you've gotten into a vicious cycle of anxiety over being able to get to sleep, cognitive behavioral therapy has been shown to be an effective way to help people “train” themselves to break that cycle. Investing in a couple of visits with a trained therapist can be well worth it!

Personally, I travel and sleep with eye masks, I think they are extremely helpful when trying to sleep. Eye masks allow me to sleep in, a bit more and stop seeing the light come in which disturbs me or rather wakes me up! I've also created a night time routine, I wear blue light blocking glasses once the sun is down. I take a warm shower with lavender soap, drink relaxing tea, take my vitamins and end my day thinking about the things I am grateful for, reviewing my day and seeing the beauty in opportunity, seeing the blessing

in good food, and in random fun things like lots of sunshine, a rainbow, getting a call from a friend and so on.

Stress Management

I wish I had learned this early. I mean way early on in life. Looking back, I believe this should be a class unto itself in elementary school. I see how children now in our modern age are plagued with diseases and issues that thankfully, I didn't have, however learning the tools early on, just like learning about history, sets the tone and the foundation for future life as you grow into an adult. The wonderful thing about being an adult now, is that I can teach and impact, children, parents, adults, tweens and teens and have them learn tools and techniques through my coaching, classes, mentoring, speaking or books.

Did you know that I do speak professionally? I do speak about stress management, health and wellness and speak openly about alopecia and how I reversed it. I speak to entrepreneurs, companies and associations alike, worldwide. I've mentored college kids and really love helping my clients make the progress they need to have success in health and hair growth. My dedication to alopecia is personal, but so is my dedication to health and wellness, because it can so easily slip through fingers when I thought I, as many do, they were doing everything right. Part of my achilles heel was stress management. Remember, alopecia and autoimmune disease is not just one thing- it's a host of things that brought you here. Like logs in a damn, we are now taking off each log, some small, some big so that we can get the river flowing more freely. Stress management was a big log for me, others were smaller, but as you can see it all adds up!

Stress kills and causes so many diseases. Did you know that 90% of doctors visits are stress related!? Just like water that begins to boil, you see it gain momentum, you see the water eventually make waves, splashing onto the stove top. At what point should we be aware that this is happening? During high school and college I never was fully aware. I always let the water hit the stove top, overflowing like a major tropical storm. Now, after years of practice, learnings, and mindfulness, I never let myself go above my thresholds. Emotions are in check. Mental health is in check and no one has the power to bother me. So how we manage stress is uber important in the

“need it yesterday” motto at work, or from demanding parents or children, obligations with friends or family and grumpy spouses and coworkers. Creating boundaries is necessary for stress management - if you cannot create boundaries you will eventually over extend yourself and continue in disease or in a vicious cycle of healing and then falling prey to it again. Make the choice to create boundaries so that your mental, emotional and physical health are improving daily, and not the contrary.

In my previous life as an event planner, you know automatically that you are bound to receive a complaint and not everyone is going to leave happy. Trying to please everyone will only hurt you and others in the long run. Much stress comes from trying to please everyone, so accept this fact and ensure your priorities are aligned with your needs.

“Stress is the “psychological, physiological and behavioural response by

an individual when they perceive a lack of equilibrium between the demands placed upon them and their ability to meet those demands, which, over a period of time, leads to ill-health” (Palmer, 1989).

Although we all experience *stress* differently, some common symptoms from stress include:

- Difficulty sleeping
- Weight gain or weight loss
- Stomach pain
- Irritability
- Teeth grinding
- Panic attacks
- Headaches
- Difficulty concentrating
- Sweaty hands or feet
- Heartburn
- Excessive sleeping
- Social isolation
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Feeling overwhelmed
- Obsessive or compulsive behaviors

Repetitive exposure of the stress response on our body is proven to lead to long-lasting psychological and physical health issues, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, anxiety and depression.

Tip: You can also reverse anxiety and depression with diet and lifestyle. This book is a great starting point for someone going through that!

Stress is inevitable. Burnout isn't.

While stress is our response, burnout is the accumulation of excessive stressors over time, which results in unmanageable stress levels.

American psychologist Herbert Freudenberger, first termed the word “burnout” in the 1970s when he referred to the effect of extreme stress and high ideals placed on “helping” professionals, such as doctors and nurses (“Depression: What is burnout?”, 2018). Today, the word has evolved and is used more broadly to refer to the consequences of excessive stress placed on any individual, no matter their occupation. When we get to the point of no longer being able to cope, we're referred to as being “burned out”.

This is where stress management comes back in, to avoid the experience of burnout.

14 Facts About Stress & Burnout

If you're not yet convinced about the need to prioritize stress management, the below 14 facts will get you over the line:

- Stress has been referred to as the “silent killer” as it can silently cause heart disease, high blood pressure, chest pain, and an irregular heartbeat (Chilnick, 2008).
- Telogen effluvium is the result of hair loss caused by stress that can happen up to three months after a stressful event (McEwen, 2003).
- Stress is believed to account for 30% of all infertility problems. In women, stress can cause spasms in the fallopian tubes and uterus. In men, it can effect the sperm count and cause erectile dysfunction (Bouchez, 2018).
- Researchers have found that stress worsens acne. More so, then the prevalence of oily based skin (Warner, 2002).
- Stress can be to blame for weight gain too. The stress hormone cortisol has been found to cause both the accumulation of abdominal fat and the enlargement of fat cells, causing what is referred to as “diseased” fat

(Chilnick, 2008).

- Correlations have been found between stress and the top six causes of death: cancer, lung ailments, heart disease, liver cirrhosis, accidents, and suicide (“How Does Stress Affect Us?”, 2016).
- In children, chronic stress has been found to negatively impact their developmental growth due to a reduction of the growth hormone in the pituitary gland (Van der Kolk, B. et. al., 2007).
- The word itself, “stress” stems from the Latin word stringere, meaning “to draw tight” (McEwen, 2003).
- In the event of chronic stress, dominant hormones are released into our brain. These hormones are intended for short-term emergencies and in the event where they exist for extended periods they can shrink, impair and kill brain cells (Wallenstein, 2003).
- Stress can increase the likelihood of developing blood clots since the blood prepares itself for injuries and becomes

“stickier” (Chilnick, 2008).

- Chronic stress can place pressure on, and cause damage to arteries and organs. This occurs due to an inflation in our bodies caused by cytokines (a result of stress) (McEwen, 2003).
- Stress is also responsible for altering our blood sugar levels, which can lead to fatigue, hyperglycemia, mood swings, and metabolic syndrome (“How Does Stress Affect Us?”, 2016).
- On a positive note, we can reduce our stress levels by **laughing** . Having a chuckle, lowers the stress hormones, including cortisol, epinephrine, and adrenaline, and strengthens our immune system by releasing positive hormones (Wallenstein, 2003).
- More good news, especially for chocolate lovers, dark chocolate has also been found to reduce our stress hormones (Wallenstein, 2003). Just make sure its over 85% cacao.

What can you do to alleviate stress in general:

Be assertive

Clear and effective communication is the key to being assertive. When we're assertive we can ask for what we want or need and explain what is bothering us. The key is doing this in a fair and firm manner while still having

empathy for others. Once you identify what you need to communicate you can stand up for yourself and be proactive in changing the stressful situation.

Reduce the noise

Switching off from technology and the constant stimuli thrown at us hourly is an important way to slow down. How often do you go offline? Make time for some quietness each day and you'll notice how all those seemingly urgent things that we feel we need to do, become less important. Plus the to-do list will always be there. Remember – recharging is the most effective way of tackling stress.

Manage your time

If we let them, our days will consume us. Before we know it – the months have become overwhelmingly busy. When we manage our time we prioritize and organize our tasks creating a less stressful and more enjoyable life.

Creating boundaries

Boundaries are the internal set of rules that we create for ourselves. They outline what behaviors we will and won't accept. Healthy boundaries are essential for a stress-free life. When we have healthy boundaries we respect ourselves and take care of our well-being by clearly expressing our boundaries to others.

Get out of your head

Sometimes it's best not to even try contending with the racing thoughts. Sometimes you just need a break. Distract yourself. Watch a movie, phone or catch up with a friend or do something positive that you know takes your mind off things.

Affirmations and imagery

The power of positive imagery and affirmations is now scientifically proven to increase positive emotion.

How? When you think of a positive experience, your brain perceives it to be a reality. So, replace those negative thoughts with positive statements and

challenge and change the way you see and experience the world. Cognitive Restructuring

In the mid-1950's psychologist Dr. Albert Ellis developed what is referred to as cognitive restructuring, a technique for understanding negative emotions and challenging these sometimes incorrect beliefs that cause them. Cognitive restructuring is a key component of Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT).

ABC Technique

The ABC technique was also originally created by psychologist Dr. Albert Ellis and was later adapted by Martin Seligman. The letters ABC stand for; A – adversity, or the stressful event. B – beliefs, or the way that you respond to the event. Then C – consequences, the result of your beliefs lead to the actions and outcome of that event. Essentially, the more optimistic your beliefs, the more positive the outcome. Note: When I was diagnosed and was going through alopecia, I knew deep down in my heart that I would heal and get my hair back. I didn't waste time with "why me" and other nonsense. I got to work with my skills of researching and figuring it out. Many times, it starts with a belief, "if you think you can or cannot - you are right" - Henry Ford.

Diet and Exercise

You've heard it before: you are what you eat. Be mindful of having a balanced and healthy diet. Making simple diet changes, such as reducing your alcohol, caffeine and sugar intake is a proven way of reducing anxiety. Another guaranteed way to reduce stress is exercise. It's proven to also be as effective as antidepressants in relieving mild depression. So get moving.

Meditation and physical relaxation

Use techniques such as deep breathing, guided visualizations, yoga and guided body scans to relax the body.

Build resilience

Resiliency is our ability to bounce back from stressful or negative experiences. To simplify, resilient people accept that the situation has occurred, they learn from what transpired and then they move on.

Talk it out Don't keep it all inside. Talk to someone close to you about your worries or the things getting you down. Sharing worries is halving them. And, most of our worries sound a lot less worrisome when we say them out loud. If you don't feel up to sharing, writing them down is also a great way to release them or by engaging an independent professional. There are plenty of services available, including free services, which you can quickly google to find what's available in your city.

Sleep

Getting a good night sleep is fundamental for recharging and dealing with stressful situations in the best possible way. While it varies from individual to individual, on the exact amount of sleep needed, an uninterrupted sleep of approximately 8 hours is generally recommended. So, ensure that you get enough Zzzz's for you. If you can take naps. In the beginning of my program I always recommend getting more sleep because while you are sleeping, you are not eating. Which is necessary for healing. In addition, it reduces stress. So go on, take a nap!

What can you do to alleviate stress at work:

- Set realistic deadlines
- Take a lunch break
- Go home on time
- Take your holiday leave
- Leave work at work
- Participate in work functions
- Establish open and professional communication
- Respect other employees
- Do not tolerate discrimination of any sort, report any instances
- Sign up for workplace training programs to develop and improve

your skills

- If required, seek therapy to manage and develop skills to cope with workplace stressors
- Develop a healthy work-life balance, creating time for exercise
- Talk to management about workload and expectations

Exercise

Outside of high school volleyball I was never much of a work out type of person. I was studying in college and working full time as well.

I was in the typical race for achieving and succeeding without paying attention to my health. Shortly I found Pilates and was immediately hooked and engaged by how strong the 60 something and 70 something aged women in my class were. I fell in love and have been doing Pilates for over 15+ years now. Once I moved to Miami Beach, other forms of being active and work outs opened up for me. I started spinning, running on the beach, different types of Yoga and Pilates. My calendar was jam packed with work outs through Classpass. Now in over 50 cities worldwide, Classpass offers a non routine approach of getting fit, staying active and being healthy. They have also opened up internationally, so check their website for current locations. I will caution those who are into weight lifting or into Crossfit. During this time of recovery with Alopecia, exercise is important, however it is also important to realize if you are in fact adding more stress to your body. I am not saying you have to quit your beloved workout regime or HIIT training or even your strength training, just stop for a bit, and resume later. Meaning, I would suggest and emphasize more relaxing and less stressful workouts. Less intense and more therapeutic. Options include, yoga, Tai Chi, walking, tree bathing, riding your bicycle, pilates, swimming, skating and doing low impact and low intense workouts as your body is wanting less strenuous and more relaxing methods. Do this for at least a month or two just to reboot your body. If you don't work out, then take long walks, preferably in nature. Tree bathing, as mentioned above is the art of walking through forests and tree condensed spaces, taking in the oxygen, sights, sounds of trees. In Japan, this is customary, and known to relax, soothe, inspire and even bring on a walking meditation when surrounded by stillness.

When I was diagnosed with Alopecia, I found it hard to work out, I found my energy had plummeted and a deep winter born depression came onto me. Don't let this happen; get out of your PJ's and take in some natural air. Benefits of working out include increased mood, more energy, better sleep, and combats diseases and improves health overall! Even if you have to start slow, start! Start by walking around the block every day. At least your body is moving and circulating. Another option if you can't leave the home or pay

for classes is to YouTube yoga classes for beginners, intermediate or advanced. You can do this in the comfort of your home. However, I highly encourage you to leave the house, spend time with others who make the commitment to themselves, and attend classes in studios. Not only will you find a community of people who are interested in the same things as you, but also, the instructor can guide you through the steps, help you with breathing, mediation, mantras, uplift you, and let's be honest, there are no distractions of phone or kids or anything else when in a studio. From someone who's traveled a lot, moved around to different countries and cities, I've found friends and community usually through pilates and yoga studios, or workouts in general. Once you make one friend, you will have an accountability partner who will be expecting you to go the next week and so on. Other ways to find fitness activities include :

- The Meetup App: An app you can download and find meet up's anywhere in the world, for fitness, hiking, cooking, photography and much more. Great app to discover your city and do new things with locals.
- The local YMCA or gym. They usually have classes or other sports that are seasonal. I remember signing up for dodgeball with NAKIDS when I moved to Austin Texas. It was a way to make friends in a new city and play some fun games. Normally teams of this nature are 18+ years of age however there are many others for children too.
- Eventbrite is another app and website that tells you what events are going on in your city, also worldwide. Events range from yoga to marathons and one day exercise festivals that you may want to check out.
- Facebook: Facebook is wonderful for events, and also for exercise studios to post specials, or open houses. Many workout places offer the first class or week for free, so you can try without any obligation. See what's around and attend! You won't regret it.

We all need a push, we all need encouragement and support. Start with supporting yourself in this endeavor and the universe will conspire to send more encouragement and support.

Meditation

I remember having a love/hate relationship with yoga when I tried it for the first time at 24hrs Fitness (a big box gym in the US), I didn't like the instructor or how they approached or lack thereof new students. However when I tried again later, years later, I found myself opening my eyes during savasana or corpse pose, and looking around to see what everyone else was doing. Unbeknownst to me, after every yoga session there's an incorporated meditation called savasana. It's at the very end, and I am so grateful for it. That's actually how my meditation practice began. Through yoga, with caring, and warm teachers and at a dedicated yoga studio. How many of you meditate? I know it's difficult to get started, but the benefits are endless. When diagnosed with Alopecia and in the middle of "getting settled" in my new home and country, I was at wits end. Everything I was accustomed to doing, the studios and friends I had forged were all wiped clean, left behind in the US. Now in the Netherlands, trying to create a tribe and same feeling was difficult when all I wanted was to show up and presto, tribe would appear. I tried going to classes but all were below my level, all were in Dutch and I couldn't find my flow. Hence, I took to youtube and felt better. But the instructor is so key that you cannot exchange the youtube guru with a real life guru. It's not the same, like eating ice cream in person or watching a commercial about it... very different experiences. Many times, great instructors leave you with wisdom, a poem, a teaching or new philosophy that opens your mind. I searched on and realized that the Art of Living was a course that my friend Maite, from Argentina had told me about years ago. The Art of Living was the true beginning to my healing Alopecia. The Art of Living is located in over 100 countries and there are programs going on all the time. I am sure there is a program and location near you. The program itself is a weekend, and by the end of the course, I felt 1000 times better. The website says that by the end of the course, you lower your stress by 78%. WOW did I feel it. This course is meditation, stress reduction, social, and worth every penny. If savasana was the beginning of my meditation practice then the Art of Living was my graduate degree. I am now able to be in the flow state more quickly and just like a muscle, you know when you are doing the exercise correctly. Trust me and go, you won't regret attending the Art of Living. By the way, they also have retreats centers in North Carolina, Germany, and India where retreats and other courses are offered.

Did you know I am also a certified pilates and yoga instructor? I am committed to my wellbeing, health and wellness! I also offer retreats. Reach

out if interested!

Once you have your foundation set, and understand how to do it and what to feel and how it works, you can use apps for daily meditation. Some apps I would recommend are Calm and Headspace which you can get from the Apple App Store. Alternatively, you can find mediating practices online, on YouTube and other ways just by googling it. In addition Deepak Chopra tends to have guided and recorded meditation challenges that are free and that are done online with Co-Host Oprah Winfrey. All my resources and the websites I mention will be listed in the references.

Personally, I did all the above. Having to do things differently, I would have done Art of Living a long time ago. The youngest person in attendance was 18. However I am sure they have courses for young ones. My weekend meditation conference was fantastic. I met lots of great people and also felt the deepest meditation *ever* of my life. My stress decreased dramatically by the end of the weekend. I would highly recommend them as a starting point. Clarity and peace overcome you once you complete their weekend conference.

Breathing

Breathing goes hand in hand with meditation, exercise and living. We do it naturally every second without giving it too much thought. Now, let's place intention and create the breath we need to detox and destress.

“Practicing a regular, mindful breathing exercise can be calming and energizing and can even help with stress-related health problems ranging from panic attacks to digestive disorders.” ~ Andrew Weil, M.D.

Since breathing is something we can control and regulate, it is a useful tool for achieving a relaxed and clear state of mind. I recommend three breathing exercises and techniques to help relax and reduce stress: The Stimulating Breath, The 4-7-8 Breathing Exercise (also called the Relaxing Breath), and Breath Counting. Try each of these breathing exercises and techniques and see how they affect your stress and anxiety levels.

Breathing Exercise 1:

The Stimulating Breath (also called the Bellows Breath)

The Stimulating Breath is adapted from yogic breathing techniques. Its aim is to raise vital energy and increase alertness.

- Inhale and exhale rapidly through your nose, keeping your mouth closed but relaxed. Your breaths in and out should be equal in duration, but as short as possible. This is a noisy breathing exercise.
- Try for three in-and-out breath cycles per second. This produces a quick movement of the diaphragm, suggesting a bellows. Breathe normally after each cycle.
- Do not do for more than 15 seconds on your first try. Each time you practice the Stimulating Breath, you can increase your time by five seconds or so, until you reach a full minute.

If done properly, you may feel invigorated, comparable to the heightened awareness you feel after a good workout. You should feel the effort at the back of the neck, the diaphragm, the chest and the abdomen. Try this diaphragmatic breathing exercise the next time you need an energy boost.

Breathing Exercise 2:

The 4-7-8 (or Relaxing Breath) Exercise

The 4-7-8 breathing exercise is utterly simple, takes almost no time, requires no equipment and can be done anywhere. Although you can do the exercise in any position, sit with your back straight while learning the exercise. Place the tip of your tongue against the ridge of tissue just behind your upper front teeth, and keep it there through the entire exercise. You will be exhaling through your mouth around your tongue; try pursing your lips slightly if this seems awkward.

- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound.
- Close your mouth and inhale quietly through your nose to a mental count of four.
- Hold your breath for a count of seven.
- Exhale completely through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of eight.
- This is one breath. Now inhale again and repeat the cycle three more times for a total of four breaths.

Note that with this breathing technique, you always inhale quietly through your nose and exhale audibly through your mouth. The tip of your tongue stays in position the whole time. Exhalation takes twice as long as inhalation. The absolute time you spend on each phase is not important; the ratio of 4:7:8 is important. If you have trouble holding your breath, speed the exercise up but keep to the ratio of 4:7:8 for the three phases. With practice you can slow it all down and get used to inhaling and exhaling more and more deeply.

This breathing exercise is a natural tranquilizer for the nervous system. Unlike tranquilizing drugs, which are often effective when you first take them but then lose their power over time, this exercise is subtle when you first try it, but gains in power with repetition and practice. Do it at least twice a day. You cannot do it too frequently. Do not do more than four breaths at one time for the first month of practice. Later, if you wish, you can extend it to eight breaths. If you feel a little lightheaded when you first breathe this way, do not be concerned; it will pass. Once you develop this technique by practicing it every day, it will be a very useful tool that you will always have with you. Use it whenever anything upsetting happens – before you react. Use it whenever you are aware of internal tension or stress. Use it to help you fall asleep. This exercise cannot be recommended too highly. Everyone can benefit from it. Breathing Exercise 3:

Breath Counting

If you want to get a feel for this challenging work, try your hand at breath counting, a deceptively simple breathing technique much used in Zen practice.

Sit in a comfortable position with the spine straight and head inclined slightly forward. Gently close your eyes and take a few deep breaths. Then let the breath come naturally without trying to influence it. Ideally it will be quiet and slow, but depth and rhythm may vary.

- To begin the exercise, count “one” to yourself as you exhale.
- The next time you exhale, count “two,” and so on up to “five.”
- Then begin a new cycle, counting “one” on the next exhalation.

Never count higher than “five,” and count only when you exhale. You will know your attention has wandered when you find yourself up to “eight,”

“12,” even “19.”

Try to do 10 minutes.

In yoga, sometimes you do pranayama breath. To start, inhale for a count of four, hold for a count of four, then exhale for a count of four (all through the nose, which adds a natural resistance to the breath). This I find, is a quick way to get anger or any negative feelings out, and if needing a quick de-stress, this tends to be my go to. This practice calms the nervous system, increases focus, and reduces stress.

To nix tension from head to toe, close the eyes and focus on tensing and relaxing each muscle group for two to three seconds each. Start with the feet and toes, then move up to the knees, thighs, glutes, chest, arms, hands, neck, jaw, and eyes—all while maintaining deep, slow breaths. Having trouble staying on track? Breathe in through the nose, hold for a count of five while the muscles tense, then breathe out through the mouth on release.

Alternate nose breathing is like an energy pick me up. A yogi’s best friend, this breath is said to bring calm, balance, and unite the right and left sides of the brain. Starting in a comfortable meditative pose, hold the right thumb over the right nostril and inhale deeply through the left nostril. At the peak of inhalation, close off the left nostril with the ring finger, then exhale through the right nostril. Continue the pattern, inhaling through the right nostril, closing it off with the right thumb, and exhaling through the left nostril.

Note: I recommend do the breathing exercises seated in a quiet spot with no distractions when possible. You might get light headed or dizzy- thats ok and its normal... the more you breathe, the more everything circulates and even toxins expel from your body with breath.

Environment: People, Surrounding and Emotions

Studies involving identical twins suggest that environmental factors also play a role in the development of alopecia. A study published in the Journal of the American Academy of Dermatology evaluated 11 sets of identical twins and three sets of fraternal twins to determine the concordance rate of alopecia. Researchers found that there was a 55 percent concordance rate for

identical twins and zero percent for fraternal twins. This supports a genetic component as the cause of alopecia. But it's not 100 percent, so environmental triggers must also play a role in the development of the disease. Some environmental factors that may play a role in the developing of alopecia include viral infections, psychological stress and trauma.

Environment plays such a crucial role in our well being and overall health. Take a simple example: I needed an airbnb for a couple weeks, booked a place and when I arrived the windows were shut and closed to the extreme where I couldn't open them for fresh air. Upon entering the smell of garbage and kitty litter pushed me back and seeing the possibility of mold and unorganized messiness everywhere made me call and cancel and leave immediately. This bad environment had a brief negative effect. Thankfully, there are other homes, options and hotels around. I am a true believer that you are not a plant, you can uproot, move and find where you need to live to make you happy. I grew up in sunny southern California. However, I don't think I could live in Orange County ever again. I've grown past it and frankly, family and the weather aren't enough to keep me there. If moving to a better place or location isn't possible at the moment, then make an action plan to move. Nowadays it's quite common for work or study abroad to allow you opportunities to move. Go explore and find where makes you happy. Texas made me sad, Miami was almost perfect, and Denver was just OK, but something was still missing. Brazil was amazing, Argentina was OK. Yes I have lived in all these spots and traveled to more than 60 countries! The world is so big, go out and take advantage. Now if you love where you live, then make sure your home, apartment or even the room you rent makes you happy. This includes the neighbors, roommates, pets and plants. There's a book I read, NY Times best seller called *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up* by Marie Kondo. She talks about decluttering and how only the things that bring you pure joy should stay, everything else should be sold or given away. Who needs 20 pairs of flip flops, or 30 purses or 40 different mugs? Everything from socks, to underwear, make up and shoes should be decluttered, organized and inventoried. Have only the art pieces, or collection of things that bring pure joy, if not, sell it. I actually purge my closet once every 6 months. I used to give all my clothes away to my sister and Goodwill which is a charity in the USA. I've given away suits and work clothes that I no longer use to charities dedicated on placing women into jobs and helping them find work. It feels

good to give, but it's also saving you space and time when choosing an outfit. Create a harmonized environment at home, office and work. This will destress you and create more space in your life.

While you are organizing each section of your drawers and closet, I find that organizing by color is easier for the eye and for the goal in retrieving items faster.

Want to bring more meaning into your life? A podcast I recommend listening to called the Minimalists, talks about how reducing their footprint and reducing the need to keep up with the Jones' brought more happiness and meaning to their lives. They went from having it all early on to being miserable, divorced and later found peace and tranquility in owning smaller home, and less stuff! Focusing less on the stuff and more on what matters like friends and relationships. Take a listen! A couple episodes and you will surely be inspired!

Perhaps you can set aside a weekend for each area of your home. You will feel so much more free once you declutter, organize and create a happier environment. Guaranteed!

When we consider environment, we also consider who you surround yourself with, family, friends, and others who you see or interact with on a regular basis. I love my friends, but I also know when to keep distance when what they do, like smoke cigarettes isn't healthy for me. I choose to leave and not be around them when they do this. I am also cognizant of the co-worker who wants others to do the work for them or who gossips too much, or the family member who's always complaining. None of these people are healthy. Some you can cut off, and others you can't - I get that. However you can minimize their rants by changing the subject, leaving the area, or excusing yourself from the talk or discussion. In addition, you can explain your next move. For example with the above co-worker, when they are gossiping, say, "I'm sorry, I don't like gossip and need to get back to work." For the friend, say, "you know I am trying to be healthy, second hand smoke isn't good for me, I need to go, hope you understand." And with the family member, depending on the level of the relationship, you can limit visits and calls with them, or perhaps change the subjects or ask them a question that has them reflect on their rant. Optimistic, supporting and loving people are

whom you should seek out. There's already too much violence on TV, bad news, bullying and bad vibes on social media and other outlets. Choosing who we spend time with is critical and is also an act of self love and care. Besides, I know you don't want to be the average of the 5 people you spend most your time with...do you? So choose to level up... grow and let go of negativity. I've quit watching TV over 8 years ago because it wastes time and is relatively negative. I've lost friends along the way who were bringing me down and not helping me be the best version of myself. I love hip hop and can sing and rap, but a lot of it, is negative and derogatory and is a turn off now. I love happy songs, and happy vibes only. I don't allow people to enter into my world who judge and criticize me, disrespect me or others around me. There are boundaries I have placed with family and friends. There's no room or space for people who put down others. I made a vow to stay away from drama and drama filled people; this gives me peace and comfort. I don't want to fight and don't like arguing. It's so easy to have a conversation with open minded people and come to a compromise or conclusion. However the only way to obtain this, is for you to implement these rules and boundaries and let others know.

Be careful how you spend your time and energy. Its all in your hands, and this will dictate your path in life. Don't be a slave to negative emotions and feelings.

Music, TV, friends, family, coworkers, bosses, partners, spouses are all apart of your environment. Choose wisely. Know that everything has a solution, don't be afraid of change as with change comes growth and peace.

Hair Masks

Below are recipes and tips on what I do to enhance my current hair, treatments for better hair, itchy scalp and how I maintain and take care of my hair with Alopecia. Many of the products you can buy at the supermarket or you might probably already have them handy in the kitchen.

Apple Cider Vinegar: I mix this 4-6 tablespoons of ACV with water and use this to rinse my hair after every wash. I let it soak for 5 minutes and then rinse again with water. ACV is great as its hydrating, neutralizing, cleansing and balancing. I also drink a tablespoon of ACV with water during the day

as its good for overall digestive and cleansing health too! ACV is helpful if you have hard water- it automatically becomes super soft at the final rinse.

I add essential oils like Rosemary and Lavender to my shampoos and conditioners. I will add at least 20 drops each and when I shampoo I take time to massage the head and massage a lot for about 10 minutes. Massaging increases the blood flow to that area.

I love creating my own masks and trying different things, so many times, I'll mash up avocados, eggs, and olive oil, mix in a blender and pour onto my dry hair leaving it in for hours, or as long as possible. Usually done at night or on weekends. I'll sleep with a plastic shower cap on so nothing gets on my pillow and/or cover my pillow with a towel.

Other oils I use are black castor oil, jojoba oil, and regular castor oil which is very thick and tacky/sticky. I'll mix these with coconut oil and leave on and then wash as normal after many hours. The longer you keep the masks in, the better they work. I have classic curly hair which is normally dry, so these types of masks are needed regardless just to soften and manage my hair. I realize though, that if I go beyond a week or two of not doing a mask, my hair becomes unruly. Set a schedule if you can and be disciplined. Yes, its time consuming, but its your hair and scalp! Nourish it! There's no right or wrong way of adding oils and ingredients, have fun with it and make your own.

DIY Hair Mask with Lavender and Rosemary Oil for Healthy, Beautiful Hair
Total Time: 15 minutes

Serves: 1 application (double the recipe if you have very long hair)

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tablespoons coconut oil (optional: 1 tablespoon olive oil and 1 tablespoon coconut oil)
- ½ ripe avocado
- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon raw honey
- 5–10 drops rosemary essential oil
- 5–10 drops lavender essential oil

Directions:

1. Place coconut oil and avocado in the blender. (For curly hair, you may want to try the olive oil per the ingredients list above.)
2. If you are using the whisk method, you will need to soften the coconut oil first by slightly heating it.
3. Add the eggs and honey and blend.
4. Add the rosemary and lavender oils and blend.
5. To apply, dampen your hair, then apply the mask evenly throughout, making sure to cover all of the hair, especially the ends.
6. Once you have applied it, cover the hair with a shower cap or towels so that you do not get it on your clothes. (If you have long hair, tie it up first, then cover it.)
7. Allow the mask sit for 45 minutes to an hour.
8. Wash out the mask with all-natural shampoo and conditioner.
9. For best results, try applying this mask once a week.

Eggs & Avo

For a moisturizing, restorative, make-it-shine homemade hair mask, mix eggs with some avocado!

- ½ an avocado
- 2 egg yolks

Let it sit in your hair for 30-45 min then rinse and wash as normal. Yogurt, Honey & Olive Oil

Honey might not sound like something you want to put on your hair, and I understand. It's like the stickiest substance found in nature. But when you mix it with a little yogurt and olive oil, it's an important component to helping get your hair back in shape.

- 1 tsp olive oil
- 1 Tbsp honey
- ¼ cup yogurt

Mix the ingredients well. Apply to damp hair, and allow to sit for 15-20 minutes. Rinse and wash your hair, and allow to dry as normal. (DIY natural.com)

Sometimes, if I want just moisture, then I use coconut oil and sleep in it for 8 hours. Then wash and rinse as normal.

I see my hair bounce and give it the volume it needs with the moisture its craving.

Itchy Scalp: I use jojoba oil directly or essential oils directly for any itchy scalp. I have never had itchy scalp until I had Alopecia. So now, I realize, my hair is growing and coming through the follicles, which is great news, but needs some calming with the lavender or rosemary. Putting it on directly is fine, although I love the sense and feeling I get, however if you are sensitive than add the oil to coconut oil or jojoba and just a few drops for same effect.

Making my own treatments is great, but I also skim the beauty product aisle wherever I go. I am always looking for natural ingredients, and organic hair treatments to continue to keep it healthy. I am not loyal to any one product, as I think that rotating and trying new ones is the best way to get the best results out of all products! Again, trial and error! Just make sure they don't have any pthalates, parabems or other toxic chemicals in the hair products. See my blog for latest news on products or recommendations!

Part 5

Outside of You

I have always loved giving blood. During college the Red Cross would have specialized donation buses where students could go in and donate. Once finished, they would get a coupon for free ice-cream or movie tickets or snacks and goodies. Yes, I am guilty for wanting something free in exchange. However the habit of giving blood every 4 months turned into a life long practice. Now, I go in, give blood, and don't touch the snacks because they all have too much sugar and are processed, but also because I don't need anything in return, I am happy to give and help others. In the US, we are fortunate to have a nationalized blood bank, but in others countries, you have to ask family and friends to give when someone is in the hospital and needs it. For example, my uncle was in the hospital in Argentina and needed blood for surgery. Thus friends, family and neighbors all went to the hospital to donate. Imagine having to rally your people like that? Giving

back, is worthwhile and has many great benefits. Beyond donating blood, and giving away clothes, I volunteer and mentor, and give my time to charities. Whether that's tutoring up and coming college graduates in the field of event planning and tourism (that's my line of work for the last 15+ years) or help a charity of choice like the humane society which is a non profit animal shelter. Find a cause you love and share some of your talents and wealth.

Added benefits to giving back:

- you feel good about doing good
- Volunteering is actually good for you. Studies have shown that volunteering makes people feel physically healthier, manage chronic health conditions and lower stress!
- you network, help others and create impact
- learn new skills, teach new skills, or develop your own skills and share skills
- volunteering looks great on resumes and CV's for future employment

Next Steps: Plan in Action

Now that you know what changes need to be made. Start making them!

I know all the information can be overwhelming and if you are starting from ground zero even more.

Where to begin? You have two options, you can go it alone and DIY (do it yourself) with this book, or you can join my two month signature program that gives you accountability, coaching and mentorship, guidance each week for two months. Another option is direct coaching with me. That's your best bet. But if you want to DIY, then that's great too. I did, and it took me 2+ years. My program graduates, see results in less time, in about 4 weeks on average. Time is of the essence I believe, but then again, I am happy I did it the way I did, because I overcame everything - naturally. I did it, and so can you!

Step 1: I would first suggest you start the AIP (Autoimmune protocol) and then at the same time, start with supplements and adaptogens. If you need more guidance around the above, schedule a call lets talk. It's better to do it right the first time then spin your wheels and have to start over later on. I

have packages that give you savings on multiple sessions. Diet is the foundation, so start there first. Clean out your kitchen and throw out the junk.

After 30-45 days, you can start reintroducing foods just like I mentioned in the earlier chapter. Remember, many foods will be off limits, like your gluten, breads, pastas and grains... just say no, and move on to my cookbook. If you bought the Starter Kit, smart move because now you have the cookbook with over 100 recipes that will help you along your journey now. That is key to staying motivated in your healthy new body!

During those 30-45 days, you are taking it easy, sleeping more and doing more relaxing things, see self care section. Nix the alcohol and caffeine for 6-9 months. Next, I would look into working out. How about taking in some yoga? Meditation? Try to find a space and time to practice. Find the Art of Living near you and make a plan to go, you won't regret it!

Next I would start decluttering your house, room by room, taking out products and pots, pans and plastic that you will no longer use and donate it. Take out all the junk food, boxed and processed foods. Once kitchen is ready, move on to bathroom, then bedroom and products, shampoos there and everything we use daily for cleaning and maintaining ourselves. Go shopping and get your essential oils and other nutrient dense ingredients. Next declutter the Marie Kondo way, keeping only the items you absolutely love, that fit and bring you joy. If you have jeans in your closet that don't fit, or dresses that are too tight, give them away! This should apply to your whole house. Do some self care and try to evaluate areas where you can also improve - maybe work relationships, family and friends? If you need to delete friends on social media, go ahead, I've done this numerous times because their "feed" no longer attracts me, or because we are simply on two different paths in life. Don't settle. This is your one life, make it the best and most positive one NOW. Furthermore, going on a social media detox would do you well. Try for 24 hrs to not be on social media or any media or news. See how much better your anxiety or depression alleviates? Then, try to set boundaries on your usage.

I'd also check out the documentaries I recommended early in the book and see other ones like Root Cause or other documentaries surrounding health.

The more you know, the more you learn, the better it is for you and your family.

By the second or third month getting the reintroductions in of good foods like eggs, seeds and nightshades, now you can try intermittent fasting. I saw the most healing when I did this because just like when you are sleeping, you are not eating, thus your gut can heal. The more rest you give it the better it is. I like doing intermittent fasting for at least 16 hours off and 8 hours on. I think that's easy to do. Note, I wouldn't try it on children as they are growing and developing.

I cannot stress enough that vitamins + fabulous diet + all the other work, will bring you back to health. It's not just one thing or another, its not just "let's pick and choose what seems fun and interesting and other things that seem too hard get left behind" - I have clients that were in my two month program, they were completely bald, and they went all in 100% into my program and did everything I told them from the start. In 4 weeks these ladies who had been **bald for YEARS** ... started to see hair growth all over. (in less than 4 weeks)

If in 6 months you don't see improvements, let me know, it can be something else you are needing attention to. Perhaps it's a parasite, giardia, candida, heavy metals or something else that needs special testing. I can guide you through that too.

Have you heard of Landmark Worldwide? Check them out, they too are internationally recognized and have offices worldwide where they host weekend conferences. They were recommended to me by an old coworker at Apple. Two years later I finally found time to do it, and loved it.

I came out so relieved from imbedded stress and it improved my personal and professional outlook and relationships, but moreover it gave me a new freedom and perspective on life and how things occur and happen. They have programs for children as young as 8 years old.

I highly recommend them, as I saw change in everyone who participated. Letting go of past, and forging a new future. WOO HOO!

As adults we carry so much burden or stress or trauma from when we were young or in our teens or from hard life events. This conference gave not just me, but everyone attending, a new lease on life. And if their tools can be implemented early on, guaranteed we would have a lot less pain and hurt and suffering in every day adults in exchange for emotionally free, at peace, and loving, compassionate individuals. Yes, it's possible to have awakenings in just a weekend. Go see them. Their info is in my references.

I've always been a resilient person. A fighter, type A, who always strives for a solution, whether creative or jumping through rings of fire, I make things happen. However with Alopecia, I have encountered many people who aren't as resilient and who need more support in this area.

Mental Toughness is something that children are especially lacking. Older generations are more resilient and more prone to not giving up. However in children and in younger adults with the onslaught of social media, and Facebook and social pressures, that new element hurts more than we older adults can fathom. It's psychological and its causing more harm than good at times. I've come across a worldwide program for Adults and children alike that specialize in Mental Toughness Clinics. They work in classrooms or on the court with physical drills to enhance, empower and construct the mental toughness needed for everyday challenges and life in general, personally and professionally. If we can arm today's children, then tomorrow's society is better equipped to make decisions and lead the world. This program for Mental Toughness can come to your school, neighborhood, city and country, anywhere in the world. They have experience working with kids and adults from all backgrounds and socioeconomic status. www.noahdahlman42.com

Alopecia for Children

You are probably wondering why this is happening to your child. Right? Through research and through the same principles of toxic burden we are seeing the same things happen in children at alarming rates. The thing is, is that 30-50+ years ago, our world wasn't as polluted or as filled with so many chemicals. Now they are finding chemicals in the umbilical cord before your child's first breath (EWG.org) This plus the amount of Csections and antibiotics and the over the counter meds and quantity of vaccines compared to when I was child or when you were a child is significantly different. The

quality of food, water, soil, air has also changed. Then you add on EMF's, the SAD diet, and so much other things that it overloads our children much more and sooner and faster than it would or should normally. The toxic burden also begins before with the mom and dad needing to do a detox before conceiving- this would be ideal, but many pregnancies are unplanned. Then perhaps if its your first child, perhaps you are breast feeding and like it or not, yes breast feeding is "best" but it also well known in the medical community that this is a form of "detox" for the mother, which good or bad, goes to the child. You see how all these factors play a part? It's a big issue, but we do have more control than we think as long as we remain knowledgeable, learning and cognizant of our actions and choices. The above is just the start, because now we have other things to worry about, on top of growing up which includes trauma, stress, bullying and so much more. Research shows that stressful events occur before the onset of alopecia in about 10 percent of adults and 10–80 percent of children with the disease. Therefore, with children, we want to navigate their stress, make adjustments to their diet, friends, social media and TV intake, along with having them learn new tools like yoga and breathing exercises.

Many of my natural approaches can be used with children, such as adding turmeric to their diet, using Bach Natural remedies, using essential oils and massage, diet of course along with stress managements techniques I share in my course.

For our young, let's help them reduce their stress which is essential so they can focus, not get overwhelmed with change in schools, classmates and grade levels. Seemingly, we as adults, forget the challenges that they too face in today's modern society. Social pressures, school pressures, pressures placed by parents and society to progress, get straight A's, be the best athlete, and to achieve. According to the Association of Accredited Naturopathic Medical Colleges, "Pediatric stress can manifest in ways ranging from behavior issues and bedwetting, to nail biting, nightmares and acting out." Here are some strategies you can use for your little ones:

Sleep – Make sure children are getting the recommended amount of sleep for their age range. Just like adults , some kids will need slightly more or slightly less sleep than recommended. Kids may also need more sleep when

fighting getting sick or going through a growth spurt. Teach them to listen to their body cues for rest.

Over-scheduling : In the age of homework, after-school activities and parties, we often feel compelled to say yes to it all. However in doing so, our mental health and that of our kids can take a toll. When in doubt roll back on some commitments and make more time for unstructured play. It's okay and even healthy for kids to be bored.

Physical activity: with childhood obesity reaching epidemic proportions, and screen time dominating the preferred activity list for most kids, getting their bodies moving is even more important. This doesn't have to be a coordinated sport, but can take the form of whatever is easy and fun for your kids. Some ideas include hula-hoops, jump ropes and good oldfashioned tag. Hit up the local park if weather permits.

Unstructured social time and play, childhood development thrives on unstructured play. This is vital to help them process their immediate world, experiment with new words and thoughts and use their imagination.

Let's face it, we're all going to experience stress at some point in our lifetimes. Be it school or job stress, moving, change in family dynamics or health issues, stress is universal. How we handle it can make all the difference in our physical and mental well-being. Coping skills ingrained in early childhood can stick with them for years to come. Here are some of our favorite coping skills .

Talking: keep those lines of communication open and try to focus 100% on your children when they are speaking to you and sharing what's on their mind. One way to make this a priority is to make a quiet routine check in before bed, kids can get pensive at this time , just like adults , and giving them the space to tell you what's on their mind can make all the difference in knowing what is important to them. Another idea is to make mealtime tech free and encourage non-judgmental and open chats during meals.

Reading: choose books that may describe the issue that is causing your child stress. You can then speak about the book and the characters in a less

threatening way than the issue straight on. It will often encourage them to open up.

Music therapy: music can help us connect with our emotions, it's never too early to learn this powerful tool, both in playing and listening to it.

Mindfulness: there are wonderful programs and videos that can introduce children of all ages to mindfulness and relaxation techniques. Sometimes videos here are more successful at connecting the dots.

Physical activity : again, so important for so many reasons including bone and muscle development, healthy weight, sleep, stress reduction and blood sugar regulation. Find safe activities that your children like and don't be afraid to mix it up. If space is at a premium or parks aren't available, jump ropes, hula-hoops and makeshift hopscotch can fit the bill.

Writing/drawing it out : art therapy can be helpful especially if the child is having a hard time finding language to express themselves.

Animals : who doesn't love petting a sweet animal? Children can benefit from this , even if it is a visit to your local shelter or pound.

In summary, healing my alopecia and that of my client's takes a holistic view and perspective. Knowing their routines, where they live, what's going on in their life and how long they've had it, how it has progressed or not, allows me to better identify the course of action. In addition, many people with an autoimmune disease tend to also have another underlying issue. In my clients, I see many suffer from anxiety and depression and thyroid and much more. This is a great start to enhancing your life, health and regaining your hair too! I've seen it work. I believe in you and that you are capable of following directions and being disciplined for your hair and health. Life takes an active participant, and so does the healing process. If you would like a more customized approach, I do offer coaching and a Signature Two Month Program just visit www.alopeciaangel.com for more info. I am happy to help and so grateful you started this journey, as the benefits to treating your alopecia with natural remedies will never have any harmful side effects, only results towards better health!

About the Author + Founder of Alopecia Angel

Johanna Belsuzarri Dahlman is the founder of Alopecia Angel. She went through Alopecia herself and cured herself through various methods using a multi prong method that focuses on health in a holistic way. Her method takes into consideration physical, emotional and mental health along with diet, environment, toxins and much more. Prior to this calling, she was a highly successful global event planner. Having traveled to over 60+ countries, working for top companies such as Apple and speaking over 3 languages fluently. She holds a masters degree in International Marketing from Boston University and an undergraduate degree in International Relations from the University of California Irvine. She's had the pleasure to study abroad 5 times, live in various countries, and build her resume with each move to another city or state. She entered the world of health and wellness when she fell in love with pilates at 24 years of age. Yoga was a natural addition. While living in Miami, running became a habit as well as long bike rides. She has elevated her knowledge and progressed her work outs by getting a personal trainer and worked out 7 days a week, interchanging movements, exercises and sports. Peak performance is what Johanna was looking for. Johanna was committed to health and also to aging gracefully. During this time she influenced those around her, from friends and family members, and coworkers alike with her knowledge and expertise on optimal health. Her best friend and grandma started pilates at 75 years old because of her encouragement! Helping others always came natural and always felt so fulfilling for Johanna. She delved deeper into books, podcasts, medical research and studies showcasing new developments. She studied more avenues of health and wellness including Chinese Medicine, Feng Shui, Reiki, and Ayurveda. A life long learner, Johanna never ceases to learn, grow and become the best version of herself. She has studied Feng Shui in China, speaks professionally and teaches, pilates, breathing, stress management, and nutrition on a regular basis. She currently lives with her husband in the Netherlands.

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